MEMOIR

OF

REV. LUTHER RICE,

ONE OF THE

FIRST AMERICAN MISSIONARIES

TO THE EAST.

BY JAMES B. TAYLOR.

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PREFACE.

In consenting to prepare the following memoir, the author was influenced not only by a request of the Trustees of the Columbian College, but by the solicitation and advice of several in whose judgment he had confidence. The hope also was entertained that some good might be done to the cause of evangelical religion.

The task, delicate and difficult as it was, has been performed with a steady purpose to do justice to the memory of an endeared christian brother, and to consult the honor of that Redeemer whom he trusted and served. The work might have been considerably enlarged, but it was deemed most expedient, as far as possible, to condense the materials, while nothing has been knowingly omitted which was necessary to make out a complete portraiture.

By many it has been regretted, that a biography of this distinguished individual, should have been so long delayed. It will be proper to state, that it is but little more than twelve months, since the resolution of the Board, requesting the performance of this duty, was received by the author—and that unavoidable delay in the reception of necessary documents prevented an immediate commencement of the work. Multiplied ministerial duties also, connected with a desire to bestow as much labor as practicable upon the memoir, have contributed to retard its publication.

As the copy-right will be secured to the Trustees of the Columbian College, it is hoped that in its sale, a considerable sum may be realized by that institution, to aid its praiseworthy designs.

Praying that the God of all grace would crown with his blessing this humble effort to glorify his name, the work is committed, with whatever imperfections it may contain, to the inspection of the christian public.

University of Virginia,
March 19, 1840.

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MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION—MR. RICE'S BIRTH—REFERENCE TO HIS PARENTS—EARLY HISTORY—AMIABLE TEMPER—MATERNAL INFLUENCE—NATURAL DECISION AND INTREPIDITY OF CHARACTER—INCIDENT—DESIRE OF INFORMATION—SERIOUS IMPRESSIONS—MINISTERIAL COUNSEL—DEEP DISTRESS.

To accomplish his infinitely wise designs, God often operates in a manner, which, to man's fallible judgment, is entirely incomprehensible. He raises up and employs instruments which men would never select, and often makes the failure of human schemes the very method of fulfilling his own purposes. These remarks are happily illustrated in those histories, which are furnished by the sacred writers. Who can review the process by which the family of Jacob was saved from famine and death, without perceiving the over-ruling agency of

the Lord, making the wrath of man to praise him, and restraining the remainder? The whole history of Jacob's descendants up to the time of their settlement in the land of Canaan, is an impressive comment on the sovereignty of Jehovah, teaching us his manifold wisdom and goodness.

In this respect, the biography of those pious men whose lives have been marked with singular incidents is replete with instruction. As we trace their footsteps through childhood, youth, and riper age, and note in the light of their whole history the several circumstances of change in their character or condition, the hand of the Lord becomes manifest, and we are prepared to admire the riches of his love in Christ Jesus. Such, there is reason to believe, will be the effect in contemplating the biography of him, whom God delighted to honour as one of the pioneers in the American missionary enterprise. In comparing the circumstances which transpired in his early life, with his subsequent labour, and influence as a minister of Christ, we learn that apparently trivial occurrences, were connected with the most important results.

Luther Rice was born in the town of Northborough, Worcester county, Massachusetts, March 25th, 1783. His father, Captain Amos Rice, being early engaged in the struggles of the revolutionary war, essentially aided in securing the independence of these United States. He was a man of naturally strong intellect, with but limited education. Having

a temper quick and ardent, and being exposed to the temptations of the camp, he seems to have contracted habits which proved unfavourable to his future usefulness, and to the peace of his family.

The mother of Luther was, in many respects, an extraordinary woman. She possessed a vigorous and clear mind, which, with the advantages of the common public schools, and her subsequent application, she had to a considerable extent improved. They were both connected with the Congregational church, though there was reason to doubt whether they had indeed passed from death unto life. This was especially the fact in relation to his father; some pleasing evidences of a change in the spiritual condition of his mother, were afterwards evinced.

This statement of the religious character of his parents, will not be surprising, when it is known that many of the congregational churches of that day, were composed of merely nominal professors, who were as corrupt in sentiment as they were loose in their lives. It was almost essential to respectability in society to subscribe to a creed, and to adhere to some forms of religion. Thus an unholy alliance between the church and world was effected, which had well nigh resulted in the expulsion of pure christianity from the land. This would have been doubtless the consequence, if the evil had been general. There were, however, many exceptions, and the Unitarian controversy, at length, produced a separation, between nominal professors, and those

who contended "for the faith once delivered to the saints."

The early years of Luther's life were not distinguished by the occurrence of any remarkable incidents. He was, when quite a child, quick in his perceptions, docile in his spirit, and amiable in his manners. As he advanced in years, and attended the common schools of that day, he gave promise of future greatness, by the aptitude with which he received instruction, and by his diligence in study. He was greatly beloved by all his class-mates, as well as his teachers, and it is not known that he ever received correction at school, or was ever involved in a personal quarrel with any of his fellow pupils.

Considerable pains were taken by his mother to impart to him religious knowledge. From earliest childhood, he was familiar with the Holy Scriptures, and was taught the Lord's prayer, which he usually repeated before retiring to rest at night. In addition to this, his mother required him regularly to memorize portions of the Westminster Catechism. The influence also of a pious aunt was employed to aid in bringing him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She was in the habit of conversing with him in a familiar manner on the subject of religion, and her instructions were effectual in producing serious impressions, when not more than four years of age. At that early period he experienced alarming fears of dying, which, however, were not of very permanent duration.—

Throughout most of his juvenile years, religious instruction was continued, and it will not be presuming too much to intimate, that these early advantages were among the most efficient instrumentalities, which were afterwards owned, of God in his conversion. This seems to have been his own view of the subject. He was often heard to express a grateful sense of the divine goodness, in allowing him to enjoy these early advantages.

Of the happy effect of maternal influence on character, we have here another evidence, in addition to the many thousands already before the world. Such influence is beyond conception, valuable and enduring. It was deemed worthy of allusion, by an apostle, in writing to (Timothy) his own son in the gospel. Every mother may be encouraged to consider the earliest years of her offspring as precious, and to improve them by pre-occupying the mind with scriptural knowledge, and giving the pliant disposition such a form as may be favourable to future usefulness.

Reference has been made to the natural sweetness of his temper in childhood. He was not, however, destitute of vigor in his plans and purposes. On the contrary, there was a characteristic decision, and promptitude, throughout the years of boyhood, which was quite remarkable. A circumstance will here be related, which, while it can by no means be justified, will serve to exemplify the intrepidity, for which he was through life, so much distinguished. At the age of sixteen, in company with another

youth, without consulting his parents or friends, he entered into a contract to visit the state of Georgia, to assist in obtaining timber for ship-building. He was absent on this expedition for six or seven months. Painful apprehensions were indulged that he would be thrown into vicious society, and acquire habits which might involve him in ruin. On his return, however, the following spring, to the great joy of his family, no perceptible change in his morals had been effected.

He now began to mingle more generally with society. Having a taste for music, and being gifted with fine colloquial powers, he soon obtained the favourable notice of all classes. Although comparatively young, he united with the sprightliness and sociability of his disposition, a singular dignity of manners. Even then, a desire for solid information rendered him an inquisitive, and agreeable companion to those, who for age and education were greatly his superiors. He was always most happy in the society of intelligent men.

It has been stated that when quite a child, he was the subject of serious impressions. This seriousness was at various times renewed, but usually passed away, leaving no permanent influence until he had reached his eighteenth year. About this period, *He* who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into his heart, leading him to a more intimate acquaintance with his own character as a transgressor of the divine law. There does

not appear to have been any particular circumstance, which was the occasion of this new discovery. Although by early training, his mind had been familiar with the whole theory of God's method of salvation; yet when he applied himself to the task of seeking deliverance from guilt and condemnation, he was disposed to hope for it in some other way. Embarrassment increased as he investigated the subject. His conceptions of the holy character of God, and the claims of a law he had violated, awakened the most alarming apprehensions, and led him to cry earnestly for mercy. But while thus imploring pardon, he entertained the idea that by some meritorious acts of his own, the blessing sought would be obtained.

The perplexities of his mind were the more increased by instructions received from the minister of the place. This individual advised to a compliance with the external forms of religion, especially, to a connection with the church; thus becoming a blind leader of the blind. There was reason to apprehend, that he himself had never known the way of life. His lady also sought to give a wrong influence to the mind of the young inquirer, by urging him to mingle with gay society, and to avoid those gloomy views of his character and condition.

The counsel thus received was far from bringing relief. In vain was the attempt made to dissipate the melancholy which possessed his bosom. A

fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation continued to disturb him; nor did he find the effort successful to satisfy his guilty conscience, by amendment of life, and an endeavour to make personal restitution to the law he had violated.

As in all similar cases, the exertion to render himself worthy in the sight of God, but the more increased his knowledge of personal and utter inability. His sense of the transcendant excellence of the law of God, and the desperate wickedness of his own heart became more fixed, and habitual, producing anguish and dread almost intolerable. Here may be appropriately introduced a reference to the state of his mind at this time, written by himself many years after, in a letter to a beloved friend.

"When I became convinced that I had not experienced a change of heart, convinced too that such change was essential to happiness—but perceived at the same time, that mine was in reality *the carnal* mind which is *enmity with God;* feeling also, that it must depend absolutely upon the will of God, whether my heart should ever be changed or not; and that no affection, exercise, or effort could possibly proceed from such a heart that should be any other than morally wrong, and justly offensive in the sight of the Lord—and saw, too, clearly that *I ought to love God,* and possess absolute submission to his holy will; I was reduced unavoidably to keen anguish and very great distress, indeed, it sometimes swelled to a dreadful agony, and was well nigh overwhelming!

"I was mostly by myself, and day after day for weeks and months, spent much of my time, in literally *weeping and wailing!* Then it was, that it did seem to me truly astonishing, that unconverted sinners were not all of them in deep and constant anxiety! Then it was, that I was astonished that christians who had been delivered from the fearful condition I saw myself to be in,—if indeed there were any such,—were not filled with exceeding joy! Then, too, it was that it did seem to me, I could make the most hard-hearted sinner to tremble, by a representation of the dreadfulness of the wrath of God, such an overwhelming sense of it often pressed terribly upon me! And, then, too, it did also seem to me, that if I ever should find mercy and deliverance from the *wrath to come,* I would endeavour to rescue others from the same most wretched condition! Although these things have somewhat faded from my mind, as to the intenseness of their impressions, I may truly say, that *my soul hath them still in remembrance!*"

He now ventured to reveal the state of his mind to a pious brother, residing in the same town. The nature of his case seemed to be understood, and deep sympathy was manifested, while every means were employed to lead him into the right way. Besides giving the best advice, his brother placed in his hands several excellent works, the perusal of which was productive of much good. Still for several months he remained in agony of spirit, not

submitting himself to the righteousness of Christ. His physical powers began to yield to the intenseness of mental feeling, so that his friends seriously feared he was about to sink into a decline. To the correspondent above alluded to, he says,

"I had been in the habit; being mostly by myself, of spending much of my time, as before stated, literally in *weeping* and *wailing*. The distress in my soul was so deep, constant, and severe, that it impaired my health. My friends thought that my ill health affected my mind; but it was directly the reverse, my distress of mind injured my health. I rested not by night nor by day. I was in the habit of waking in the night in extreme agony of feeling. It was true of me, at that period, with a little addition, as expressed in Young's Night Thoughts:

> "From short (as usual) and disturbed reposed,
> I wake; but wake to woe!"

"Connected with the period of my deep anxiety and distress, previously to the receiving of comfort and hope, there were two occurrences of so distinct, peculiar, and marked a character, as to be proper here to be particularly noticed. On one occasion, I had been reading "Stoddard's safety of appearing in the righteousness of Christ." It was a description of the vile, polluted, guilty condition of a sinner, connected with the fact, that for such, the Saviour shed his precious blood! For a moment, a flood of light burst upon my astonished soul! It was entirely clear and evident, that I, my very

self, *personally*, was that odious, guilty, justly condemned criminal described; and that for me, in very deed, the infinitely glorious and infinitely lovely Son of God actually suffered and died! O, my feelings were indescribable! my self-loathing, my love of Jesus, were alike inexpressible! Tears flowed freely! It was truly something like *joy unspeakable, and full of glory!* And I felt as if I should have nothing more to do on earth, but to rejoice, adore, and praise God and the Redeemer! But in a few minutes all was past, and I was in the same guilt, condemnation, and wretchedness, as before; and so remained, I am not now able to recollect for how long a period afterwards.

"On another occasion, I had been praying to God to show *me the worst of my case!* Rising from my knees, and laying down upon my bed for sleep, it seemed for the moment as if I was actually descending into hell! my horror and agony, it is not possible for language to express! It was but for a moment, nor could I have sustained it longer! Never since have I dared to pray that God would show me the worst of my case, or that he would show any sinner the worst of his case. I am sure no one could sustain it a moment! Never before nor since, have I felt as at the moment, and for pretty much all the day! and I hope, I shall never feel it again! The dreadfulness of the impression was such, as produced a noticeable effect in my appearance during the next day! I was awfully

afraid I should lose my reason. A case, too, of a deranged man, that I had heard of, I thought I could pretty distinctly understand. He said *he had felt the wrath of God upon his little finger!* Such was the dreadfulness of the wrath of God, that but the touch of it upon that little extremity of his person, had, as it were, blasted his whole being in utter ruin! Such was the import of his representation. Such was the idea, I could then distinctly, awfully apprehend. There was an awfulness of horror in it, which cannot possibly be described! But in a few days it was gone; except as matter of recollection! But I did think, if ever I should indeed find deliverance and comfort, *I would warn the wicked of their danger:* and I did feel as if I could verily make the most *hard-hearted* sinner tremble! I did think I would live differently from any other, I have ever known, and better! But alas! alas!"

CHAPTER II.

CONTINUED ANXIETY—RELIEF—PECULIAR FEELING OF SUBMISSION TO THE DIVINE WILL—HAPPY STATE OF MIND—THE CHANGE MANIFEST TO OTHERS—BOOKS READ PREVIOUS TO CONVERSION, AND THEIR INFLUENCE—DESIRE TO BE USEFUL—CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH IN NORTHBOROUGH—PROFESSION OF RELIGION—DEEP PIETY—ANECDOTE—SPECIAL EFFORTS TO DO GOOD—FORMATION OF PRAYER MEETINGS—OPPOSITION FROM VARIOUS SOURCES—HIS MEEKNESS.

It has been already intimated, that there was something remarkable in the protracted character of his distress of mind, when taken in connection with his early knowledge of the theory of religion. As he had been instructed in the things of the kingdom, and might be supposed to have known the good and the right way, why did he not unhesitatingly walk in it? The reason is obvious. It was not a way which his carnal heart approved. There was something too simple and mortifying to his pride, to be saved as an utterly helpless, and justly condemned sinner, by faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ. Hence the long continued struggle. There was a reluctance to approve of the righteous retribution which his sins might have realized, and to submit to God as an infinitely holy, just, and good sovereign.

How inefficient is the mere knowledge of what is right. An early religious training, and scriptural ideas of truth are vastly important, but unless the heart be rightly affected, no claim to the character of a child of God can be entertained. Well might the divine teacher, say, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. "The natural man discerneth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "The carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed, can be."

But to return to the narrative. The period of submission came, and that was the period of relief. The enmity of his heart was slain, and as a prostrate, humbled rebel, he made the all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the foundation of his hope, and rejoiced in God his Saviour with exceeding joy—in God, the just and holy God, he could now rejoice, and found his overflowing heart running out in warm emotions of love. He was willing to be the Lord's for time and for eternity. Perhaps the real state of his mind at this time cannot be so well described as in his own language. "At length," he observes, "the period of deliverance drew nigh! One morning the thought came into my mind agreeably to what the good ministers of a century back were wont occasionally to propose, as a discriminating method of testing the condition of persons—whether I would be willing to put a

blank sheet of paper with my name at the foot of of it, into the hand of God for him to fill up my destiny as might seem good in his sight! I felt that I ought to be perfectly willing to do this, but was not; and as the idea which was unpleasant to me, was departing, I considered distinctly, that I was like the foolish bird, which is said to hide its head from the sight of danger and remain all exposed to it.

"In the evening of the same day, a little after sunset, the same thought returned. I felt that I should be willing thus to put a blank into the hand of God, to be by him filled as he might please! Nay, being weary of the quarrel with God, so to speak, in which I had been so long involved, I felt as if I could wish it were literally a fact, that I could so dispose of myself and of the case. It farther occurred to me, whether I would not be willing for God thus to write out my destiny and retain it with himself, letting me know it only so fast as it should come to pass: to which my mind and feelings readily assented: and a moment's reflection presented it to my view as the obvious reality of the case: I was absolutely at the disposal of God; and should know the details of my destiny just as the same should be developed. And I then found in this disposition of absolute unreserved submission to the will of God, a sweet and blessed tranquillity.

"From that moment, I seemed to be on the Lord's side—was no longer at variance and in quarrel with my Maker; and from that day to this, I have en-

tertained a hope, that through the abundant mercy of the Lord, and the rich grace of the precious Redeemer, and the power of the Holy Ghost, on the ground of the great atonement, I have become *reconciled to God!* And I may say, too, to a very happy extent, this hope has remained invariable and unshaken. My feelings often vary, and vary much; but not my hope. And it must be quite obvious that while pleased with the will of God, one must be happy.

"This happy experience took place one Saturday evening, in the fall of the year, a little after sunset; I do not recollect the day of the month; though I very distinctly remember the hour of the day, the spot where I was, and the circumstances around me. In the morning the burden of my prayer was, for absolute submission to the will of God. I seemed too, to be on the side of God! reconciled to him! I had been in the habit of praying, or trying to pray: but it seemed rather like the quarrel, the unreconciled pleadings of an enemy in chains, than the submissive supplications of conscious unworthiness at a throne of grace! But now all was changed: I was on the side of God—was his, and had no longer any thing to do *of my own* but in his service, *as his property.*

"At breakfast, I began to talk in a manner different from what the family had ever heard—the happiness of giving one's-self absolutely to God! What, said one, must we be willing to be damned? I observed, that I had said nothing about being

damned, but apprehended that the only way to escape that dreadful end, was *to give ourselves absolutely to God!* It appeared to me too, so reasonable, and proper, and happy, that I almost thought I really could persuade persons to do it; and felt as if, could they but be prevailed with, once to make the experiment, they would in a moment find such delight in it, that they could have no wish ever to retract. From that day to this, I have been trying in some form or other, thus to persuade men; but soon found, and have continued to find, that nothing short of divine power and influence can accomplish it.

"After breakfast, I sat reading, not conscious of the effect on my countenance of the delightful workings in my bosom; till my sister asked, what was I smiling at? That Sabbath was truly a delightful one to me. I now felt perfectly well as to health, and was continually singing by myself, instead of weeping and wailing as before.

"Come sound his praise abroad,
And hymns of glory sing:
Jehovah is the sovereign God,
The universal King."

"After finding myself thus happy in the Lord, I began to reflect in a day or two whether touching this reconciliation with God there was any thing of Christ in it or not! It then opened very clearly and sweetly to my view, that all this blessed effect and experience arose distinctly out of the efficacy

of the atonement made by Christ. That I was indebted wholly to him for it all, and indeed the whole of that luminous system of divinity drawn out in the Westminster Catechism, opened on my view with light, and beauty, and power. This I had been taught to repeat, when a child. I then felt and still feel glad that I had been so taught."

An entire change was now wrought, not only in his feelings, but in his whole character—old things were passed away, and all things became new. While the foundation of his hope, was Christ Jesus, and him crucified, he began to serve the Lord in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. As he had before been unable to conceal the deep seated gloom which pervaded his mind; so now he desired not to remain a passive recipient of the divine favour. Wherever he went, he carried in his countenance and conversation, the indications of a change, as happy as it was supernatural. After realizing deliverance, he says, referring to this time.

"I had much freedom and readiness in conversing on the subject of religion. Scarcely for a season, did any opportunity of speaking to any person about the things of eternity occur without my having something to say. This soon began to make a noise, and to give offence. Professors of religion and ministers of the Arminian stamp, were among those that found fault with my forwardness, and making too much ado about religion. But my heart was in the thing and I could not stop. I felt

for the souls of perishing sinners around me. I felt too, that in real religion, there is happiness."

Speaking of the works to which he had access previous to his conversion, he says, "the books that I read during the period of my distress, which was a year and a half or more, were such as the works of John Newton, Alleine's Alarm, Baxter's Call, Baxter's Saint's Rest, Stoddard's Safety of appearing in the Righteousness of Christ, Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul, President Davies' Sermons, and so on, and I still think these excellent and very valuable works. Indeed I cannot but esteem it a signal favour in Divine Providence, that in the absence of other much needed helps, such truly good books fell into my hands I read them with very serious attention; for I felt that eternity was awfully at stake. I read the Bible too, of course, with much anxiety, from which and from such books as those just mentioned, and the Catechism, the incipient outline of my religious sentiments was formed; my exercises of experience modified and characterized; and my hope developed, shaped and established: *Glory to God!*"

At this time, Luther had reached his nineteenth year. The happy feelings to which allusion has been made, did not expire with the novelty of the change he had realized. For a series of months the candle of the Lord shone round about him, while he triumphed in the riches of that mercy, which had relieved him from the bondage of sin. He now began to inquire what he might do to

glorify his Divine Redeemer, and soon determined that it was his duty to make a public profession of religion by uniting with the church. There was a special desire entertained to mingle with the pious, in commemorating the dying love of Christ at his table. But in attempting to discharge this duty, and enjoy such a privilege, he found his mind involved in perplexity.

The church in Northborough with its minister, were far from entertaining views and feelings congenial with his own. Indeed most of the members of the church, while they could not but admit that a remarkable change in the whole character of Luther had occurred, were unable to sympathize with him, either in those holy joys which then inspired his soul, or in the deep anguish which he had previously experienced. Like Nicodemus, they were ready to inquire, "how can these things be?" They ascribed all to the influence of an excited imagination, and denominated all a pernicious enthusiasm.

The very fact that but little communion of soul could be enjoyed under these circumstances, was sufficient to produce hesitation in the mind of this youthful disciple. But there was still a stronger objection. Comparatively inexperienced as he might then have been, he knew enough of divine truth to be aware that the church was sadly deficient in her views of the word of God, and in the spirit and practice of most of her members. The form of godliness was there, but its vitality had nearly departed. Serious scruples were entertained lest in

forming connection with this people, he should be lending countenance to error. But, in surveying the whole ground, he saw no method of avoiding the difficulty. No church within his knowledge was of a different character. At length he resolved to testify his own love to the Saviour by an open profession and a personal obedience to his commands; while he entertained the hope that by the divine blessing he might be the instrument of effecting a change in the church itself. His union with the church took place, March 14th, 1802, a short time before he had entered his 20th year.

He now found himself thrown into a new sphere of labour, and involved in new responsibilities. With his characteristic firmness, he resolved upon the faithful discharge of duty, whatever might be the sacrifice. In his father's house the family altar had long been unknown; an attempt to rebuild it was successfully made. He could find none in the household, who would consent to unite with him in morning and evening devotion, but his mother, and his youngest sister, who about this time had also become a disciple of the Redeemer. In his daily intercourse with the family, he maintained a dignified gravity of manner, and a spirituality of temper, which evinced the sincerity of his aims, and commended to all, the happy effects of pure and undefiled religion.

There was, too, constantly manifest, the most amiable and affectionate regard to the comfort of those around him, showing that while the gospel

restrains unholy purposes and passions, it produces no churlish influence, nor deadens the kindlier and softer sensibilities of our social nature. While therefore, he was mild and kind to all, he was not afraid to rebuke sin when necessity required. An anecdote related by his brother Asaph, will serve to show, how constantly the love of Christ influenced his heart. One morning, the next older brother to himself, who was devoted to carnal pleasures, boasted in his presence of some sinful gratification, in which he had participated the day previous. With a look full of benevolence, and a tone of deep solemnity. Luther interrupted him and said; "Ah! brother! if sinners did take as much pains to work out their salvation, as they do to effect their ruin, how few would be lost."

He began also to make special efforts by conversation and otherwise, to influence the minds of the unconverted. Even at this early age, he possessed a peculiarly happy talent for giving a serious direction to the thoughts and feelings of those around him. This talent he wisely improved. He was never unwilling to have it known, that he was a follower of Christ, nor was he ashamed or afraid to vindicate his cause. Frequently would he enter into free and affectionate conversation with his young companions, warning them to escape the wrath to come. "At that period," he himself observes, "my mind was constantly upon the subject of religion and the salvation of souls—truth appeared to me

very clear and precious. While employed in my wonted daily avocation, my mind would be meditating how to speak to others on the concerns of eternity."

Another subject of deep and painful solicitude with Luther, was the spiritual condition of the church. He beheld the prevalence of erroneous sentiments in regard to some vital points; while by far the greater portion of the members were indulging in a state of carnal ease and worldliness. He could not reconcile it with his obligations, to remain a silent spectator, and yet he could not avoid embarrassment of mind arising from his youth and inexperience. He determined on a prudent, yet decided course. Having found a few individuals in the church of kindred spirit, a friendly intercourse was commenced, and a free interchange of sentiment indulged, by which they became mutually established in the faith. His next step was to appoint and lead a social prayer meeting. It was also designed for free conference on their own personal feelings. These meetings were commenced the same year in which he united with the church.

His brother Asaph, in referring to the subject remarks: "These meetings were entirely new in the place, and but few attended. Until this period he was not molested but suffered to enjoy his opinions; but when it was found that his religion was an active principle, opposition began to rear its brazen front. His meetings were held in an old school

house, but it was not long before it was locked up, and he driven from the place. Some two or three meetings were afterwards appointed at the residence of an old professor of religion, but when he found they were unpopular, he declined opening his doors for that purpose. An appointment was then made on thanksgiving day at the house of one of the deacons of the church. As soon as it was known, many of the neighbours assembled and uttered such threats as induced the old gentleman to countermand the appointment." His brother Asaph then opened his house, and the meetings were there for some time continued. He seems to have enjoyed these seasons in a very high degree.

In a letter to a friend, he thus refers to these meetings. "Not only was the opposition of my own respected and dear father to be encountered; but that of other professors of religion, members of the same church with myself, and of the unconverted and the wicked. But *God suffered none of them to set on me to hurt me*, though some threatenings were utterred. Scarce a member of the church dared fully to countenance my course—for really considerable excitement prevailed for a season among the people in relation to my course. I could not refrain from talking with every one, that met with me on the subject of religion; nor could I refrain from holding religious meetings, called conference meetings, to read, pray, exhort, and converse with such as attended, although only half

a dozen ventured to attend. My brother, then a member of the same church, now the only surviving one besides myself, of seven, being of an independent spirit, regardless of the opposition of the minister, professors, and the multitudes, although he did not unite with me in my course, yet allowed me at any time to hold meetings at his house. There was a Baptist in another neighborhood not far distant, who would also, allow me to hold meetings at any time at his house. I do not now recollect any other, that would do it. A cousin of mine, deacon of the same church, and one among the more apparently religious of the professors, consented I might hold a meeting at his house, but before the day appointed came, he withdrew his consent, and utterly refused to permit it! I seriously asked him how he thought that it would appear in the day of judgment, his refusing the friends of Christ to meet in his house to pray and talk together of the things of the kingdom of Christ, because the enemies of Christ spoke against it! But nothing could move him! I insisted that his refusal was a violation of his previous promise to me, but to no purpose! Such was the state of things that immediately ensued, when it pleased the gracious Redeemer to give me comfort and life in religion. *A candle is not lighted to be put under a bushel.* My profession of religion, while I had only the *form*, without the *power* of godliness, made no disturbance. But the light cannot fail to give uneasiness to those *who love darkness!*"

In these endeavours to promote the spiritual good of the church, he was joined by a relative, who was at that time preparing to enter the ministry. A few others, also, were his companions in labour. But when persecution raged, nearly all forsook him and fled. He was not however forsaken of *Him* for whom these trials were endured. The cheering smile of his Lord and Master was enjoyed, and this was an ample recompense for the loss of all earthly good.

The most painful circumstance connected with the trials of Luther, has not yet been mentioned. Nor would it have been introduced were it not, that it constitutes an important item in the development of his character and feelings, and of his future history.

This circumstance was the stern opposition of his father. His brother Asaph says in reference to it: "in the persecution he endured was literally fulfilled the prophecy of the Saviour, 'a man's foes shall be they of his own household.' His father became his most bitter enemy, furnishing materials for opposition and ridicule which had not the least foundation in fact. His mother stood by and defended him in his trials, which made him feel so peculiarly tender towards her in all after life. I believe there was but one house, excepting my own, in which he was permitted to hold religious meetings."

There are two things which here deserve the notice of the biographer. In the course he pursued,

and which excited all this rancorous feeling he did not depart from the path of discretion. There was nothing in his measures which did not accord with all that might be expected from an active, spiritually minded christian. In the second place; the rage of his foes was met with the meekness and mildness of the lamb. This is the testimony of his surviving brother. "The opposition he met with," he says, "was principally from professors of religion. His naturally good temper secured for him the friendship of his early companions, for though he was serious, he was not morose; though religious, he was not austere. He maintained such consistency of conduct, that like the princes and governors of old, they could find no fault with him, except it was in relation to his God. Although his father rarely spoke peaceably to him; he bore all with such meekness of manner, and kindness of language as fully to demonstrate that he had imbibed another spirit. His conduct in, and out of the family was uniform." Referring, himself, in another clause to the treatment of his parent, he makes use of the terms, "my own dear and respected father:" and indeed always seemed to entertain the feelings which a child should manifest towards his parent.

That something of the general spirit by which he was actuated may be learnt by the reader, an extract from a letter addressed to a beloved aunt in the year 1804, will here be inserted. "I have lately had a dispute or two both against Arminianism and

Universalism. I think it quite probable, that I shall have more. I stand in great need of your prayers, that I may not do an injury to religion, while attempting to defend it. I think it important for christians firmly to maintain the doctrines of the Bible; but it is highly necessary that we maintain them with meekness, with disinterestedness, and love. Let us love the truth; and whenever we have a call to defend it, let us endeavour to *manifest* that we love it, and contend not for victory, but for the truth's sake. Let us by all means endeavour to manifest that we wish well to our opponents; and carefully avoid the smallest appearance of an angry or self-important spirit. Let us endeavour that benignity, meekness, and inoffensiveness may be distinguishing features in our lives and conversation. Let us very earnestly strive that these beauties may be woven into the very web and texture of our whole deportment. Let us give the most heedful and persevering diligence to gain the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. This is that amiableness, which free from selfish ostentation, it may be truly said, that it

> "Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
> But is, when unadorned, adorned the most."

Let us study the life and character of Jesus, and tread in his footsteps with a holy ambition of soul. And though we cannot, and indeed if we could, ought not to help being grieved at the miscarriages of others, yet let us endeavour to profit by them.

Let them serve to keep us humble, watchful and prayerful. Let us strive to rid ourselves, as far as possible, from every impropriety, from every inconsistency and blemish. This we are bound to do by the tenor of our high calling. Are persons to judge of the master by what they observe in the disciple? How infinitely important is our character as christians! What high responsibilities are we under! The glory of the eternal Jehovah, as well as the happiness of immortal souls, is, as it were in some measure entrusted with us. With what diligent concern should we regard so sacred, so infinitely dear and important a deposite. Let us then my dear and respected aunt, endeavour to glorify Christ, and recommend his peaceful benign religion to all around us, by a meek, inoffensive and winning deportment; and then, no doubt, we shall experience the truth of that lovely scripture! The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord."

"Among other efforts, I have drawn up a subscription paper, and after spending some time, have obtained fifteen subscribers, in this town, for the Magazine; and I expect to gain a few more. This I hope is a token for good. I hope the Magazine will be blessed to the conversion of sinners in this place; and that the money paid for them will be blessed to the conversion of others. The design of the "Missionary Society" is benevolent; and by taking the Magazine we assist, and encourage them as well as benefit ourselves. I have engaged to be

at the trouble of getting the Magazine into town for all who set their names to my paper. I went to Mr. Austen's last Wednesday, after the first No. The more I see that man, the better I like him. He thanked me for my exertions in the good cause, and appeared to be pleased that there were so many subscribers in this place. He encouraged me to exert myself to do good: but at the same time, this holy man did not forget to caution me against that dangerous enemy to our souls, spiritual pride. He also gave me the pleasing intelligence, that christians throughout the world are quite alive to the interests of religion. Such news is very animating; I know of nothing more calculated to rouse our sluggish souls, than hearing of the life, activity, and zeal of others. If christians are in general stirred up, may we not look upon it, as a token, or rather an earnest, that God is about to spread the triumphs of the cross! What cause then is this of joy and praise, for every christian."

CHAPTER III.

THOUGHTS RESPECTING AN ENTRANCE INTO THE MINISTRY—DETERMINATION TO PURSUE A COURSE OF STUDY—JOINS LEICESTER ACADEMY—ENTERS WILLIAMS COLLEGE—INCREASED DESIRE FOR THE SALVATION OF MEN—SEEKS THE REFORMATION OF THE CHURCH OF NORTHBOROUGH—LETTER TO UNCONVERTED BROTHER—SELF-EXAMINATION—SENSE OF PERSONAL UNWORTHINESS—CHRISTIAN CHARACTER AT COLLEGE—FILIAL AFFECTION.

Two or three years from the time he joined the church, some inquiries began to be indulged, respecting the propriety of devoting himself to the christian ministry. Up to this period he had laboured on the farm, and expected to continue at this employment through life. The fond desire had been cherished to remain with his parents, and contribute while they lived to their comfort and support. But God seeth not as man seeth. The trials which on every side were suffered, produced a purifying influence on the heart, and led to a more unreserved consecration to God. As his brother expresses it: "In his father's house, he was made to bear the yoke in his youth, and was trained to the cultivation of those graces, so useful in proseting the work in which he was to spend the remnant of life."

A reference to this important period, and the circumstances which inclined him to think seriously of entering the ministry is contained in one of his own letters, written in the year 1835. He thus proceeds: "Important consequences frequently spring from causes apparently trivial and inadequate; and the most important turns in life, find their origin sometimes in circumstances of an unpleasant nature, often in things unlooked for, and not taken into the account in calculating the plan and course to be pursued. This observation arose in my mind, in reflecting on circumstances which were connected with the original purpose to obtain a collegiate education, with a view to the christian ministry; and indeed all the more important turns in my life thus far have been unexpected, till almost in contact, or so to speak, with the very period of their occurrence, growing out of circumstances not thought of before hand, and not taken into the calculation in forming the plan of pursuit. These turns have, therefore, been mostly unexpected; or, if contemplated at all in the distance, have been developed at a time, or in a way not previously anticipated. *The way of man is not in himself.*"

"My former letter brought the recital of events, through which the guiding hand of Divine Providence was conducting me, to the conclusion then formed of seeking an enlarged and proper education, with a view of preaching the gospel. A circumstance of deeply embittered unpleasantness was

intimately mingled with the considerations, which constituted the basis of that important turn in my earthly career. The circumstance here alluded to, was the opposition of my father, (but still I venerate the memory of a name so dear,) yes, the opposition of my father to that *life in religion*, which I could not refrain from manifesting! He, as well as my mother, (still exceedingly dear to my memory) was a member of the same church which I at first joined. While I was merely sober, serious, and moral, but unacquainted with the *power* of vital godliness, he was well enough pleased. But when it pleased God to make me see, and feel, and manifest the reality and life of religion; having never experienced, as I have reason to fear, any thing of the kind himself, he could not bear with it in me! This state of things, effectually uprooted the fond anticipation I had indulged of possessing the home-place, and taking charge of my parents, (a consideration exceedingly dear to me) in their latest decline. And thus what might otherwise have constituted a material barrier in the way of my devoting my life to the sacred service of the ministry, was entirely removed. How mysterious are the ways of Divine Providence."

The idea of obtaining a collegiate education, was first suggested by an Evangelic Calvinistic minister, residing about ten miles distant from Northborough. He had been a witness of his toils and trials, and believed that God intended him for eminent useful-

ness. Previously to this period every opportunity of improvement had been embraced, and thus his mind was stored with much useful information. But now he resolved on passing through an entire course of study. That he might be prepared to enter college, he became connected with the Leicester academy, and pursued the preparatory studies with commendable diligence. Three years were spent in this manner. To assist in defraying the expenses, part of the time was occupied in teaching a day school at Paxton, and conducting a singing class at night. Amid these cares and labours, there was no intermission of holy devotion to the Redeemer's cause. Prayer meetings were still held under his superintendence; and endeavours were constantly made to win souls to Christ. The varied perplexing trials to which he had been subject, had produced a very salutary influence on his own heart, so that besides vigorous exertions to benefit others, he was habitually prompt in the duties of self-examination and prayer. It is stated by one who had opportunity of knowing that he delighted especially in communion with God, and often referred to the inexpressible satisfaction received in carrying all his griefs before the throne, and there seeking aid and direction. Nor did he seek in vain. The Lord strengthened with all grace, by his spirit in the inner man, and enabled his servant to exhibit in the presence of all his foes the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.

Mr. Rice entered Williams college in the early part of October, 1807. In passing through the requisite examination, it was found that he was prepared at once to enter the Sophomore class. This fact will determine how well the three previous years at the academy had been improved. Though deeply and constantly interested in the salvation of sinners, this solicitude was not allowed to prevent the closest application to study. Indeed it seems rather to have operated as a stimulus. The principle had been settled that he belonged to God, and the best means of qualifying himself for effective service were deliberately sought. That some idea of the tone of his religious feeling at this time may be formed, a brief extract from a letter to his brother will be inserted. It is dated,

WILLIAMS COLLEGE, *Oct.* 14, 1807.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have now been here a little more than a week, and being settled down to study, begin to feel at home. I am not yet much acquainted with the students. There is, however, I believe, a considerable number of serious and hopefully pious persons among them. There is also, I fear, a considerable number, I might say, a majority of the scholars who appear not to be serious, or, in any proper sense attentive to religion. There have been three deaths in this town, since my arrival, which is only nine days. Two young persons who entered the Freshman class in this college at Commence-

ment, have been summoned to appear in another world. One of them, the President's son, died at Commencement, soon after he entered the college. How uncertain and precarious are all earthly connections and concerns! Life is uncertain, health is uncertain, indeed all things with which we are conversant in this world. In such a condition, how precious is the gospel of Christ! What an immensity of good does it present! It seems to be the very thing we stand in need of. It completely meets the exigencies of our cases. In this world of crime, wretchedness, and uncertainty, it makes over to the believer, the blessing of God. To those who comply with it, it makes all desirable good absolutely certain. How important then is a compliance with the gospel! How desirable that christians should duly appreciate this importance! that they should live agreeably to their high hopes and expectations, and walk worthy of their vocation! How deplorable to see such vast multitudes of our fellow sinners neglect, and that too for a thing of naught, this infinitely rich inheritance! How cutting to the friends of Jesus, to see wicked wretches spurning the Saviour, slighting his infinite mercy, and trampling his boundless compassion under their feet."

A removal from the town of Northborough did not result in a diminution of interest for the spiritual welfare of the church in that place. It had long been his heart's desire, and prayer to God, that a change might be effected, and now while prosecu-

ting his studies in another town, he still cherishes a deep solicitude on this account. In many letters he adverts to the subject, expressing the hope that his brother would make continued endeavours to promote the improvement in holiness of those with whom he was connected. Being well acquainted with the impediments in the way of success, and the limited number of those who desired a different state of things, he urges the increased responsibility to effort. "I think it your duty," he remarks, "to use great and persevering exertions to produce a reformation in the church; that you are a proper person to undertake such a work—that there is reason to hope for, at least some degree of success, and certainly no reason to fear that things will be driven to a worse state. There is therefore, nothing to lose, make the experiment—the matter is of serious and awful moment.

"A few observations upon each of these particulars. With respect to the first, there can be no doubt that we are under indispensable obligations to use great and persevering exertions to reform mankind, so far as we have any influence over them. The proofs of this are numerous, and need not be here dwelt upon. Suffice it to say, that the precepts of our religion, and the very nature of benevolence, unitedly enforce it. This is our duty in general; but you are obliged to particular and strenuous exertions, in that particular church, by express covenant engagements. I conceive that

as individuals, we are bound to watch over every other individual. Any other construction makes the covenant in this respect a mere form of words, without any meaning—a solemn trifling with the Almighty! the very thought of which should make us tremble. If individuals be not bound, neither is the church, for the church is made up of individuals.

"But how must reformation be attempted? The need of it, and the importance of using exertion for its accomplishment, are obvious and readily acknowledged: but what shall be done? What particular method of procedure will be most proper? What occurs to me as being the most likely way of doing good, under your circumstances is this: Talk with Mr. W. represent the case to him in its true light, with great plainness and solemnity; and press it home with a faithfulness which looks forward to the bar of God, and at the same time with a deference due to his station, and a meekness becoming christianity. Converse in much the same way with the religious brethren of the church. Endeavour to get them engaged in the same work, get some of these to meet with you once a week, fortnight, or month, as may be thought proper, humbly and earnestly to beg the blessing, direction, and aid of the Almighty God.

"This appears to me a very necessary, and vastly important step, which I beseech you to weigh in your own mind with prayerful attention. Could I

hear that this were practised, I should expect a desirable issue; but without it, I do not look for any reformation. I said there is reason to hope for some degree of success; this appears to be evinced by experience. The faithful labours of God's children have often been attended with his blessing; and why have not you as much reason to expect the blessing of God, in the faithful and pious discharge of duty, as others who have gone before you.

"Who can say that God may not have it in his infinitely holy mind, to revive religion in Northborough? Who knows but that you may have been raised up for an instrument in some measure of so great a good? And is it not the slightest possibility of an event so desirable, sufficient to call into exercise all the powers of the mind, and to excite the most energetic and persevering exertions? Methink it would be our delight to be pleading the cause of our glorious Redeemer, were it not for the amazing insensibility of our hearts. Ought not our souls to burn within us, and to bound with holy desire to be engaged in such a cause?"

It will be seen from these extracts how ardently he desired the prosperity of the church with which he still retained membership. None can fail to approve of the judicious suggestions contained in this letter. They evince a remarkable discretion for one so young in the faith. In another extract, he refers to the best method of determining the

path of duty in all seasons of perplexity, and applies it to the anxiety of his brother respecting the state of things in Northborough. It is in answer to inquiries on the subject.

"The rule by which we are bound to walk, is not the opinion of erring, sinful fellow-worms, but the infallible word of God. This is a perfect rule and a sufficient guide, and contains proper directions for every case; but yet such is our short-sightedness, such our blindness of heart, so limited and superficial our acquaintance with God's blessed book, that we may be still liable to doubt, and hesitate concerning duty under various circumstances. It is a pretty clear case, however, at least with me, that in cases of hesitation and perplexity, love to God and religion is the best casuist that can be consulted. It is apprehended that if the heart be properly under the influence of holy affection, there will not be great danger of making very injurious mistakes in practice, or of neglecting very important duties. Gracious souls by living near to God, in holy communion with the sacred Trinity, may acquire a peculiarly desirable habit of judging and determining upon the fitness and propriety of present conduct, in some sense, to use Newton's comparison, as a musical ear judges of sounds. This suggests the importance of being heavenly-minded, if we would avoid perplexity and pangs of conscience.

A very affectionate letter, written from college

to an unconverted brother, deserves a place here, evincing as it does the deep concern felt for one so nearly connected, and who was exposed to the wrath to come. It is dated

"WILLIAMS COLLEGE, *Nov.* 25, 1807.

"BROTHER JACOB:—Whatever difference of opinion may, at present, exist between us with respect to religion, and however variant may be our practice in this respect, the time is not far distant, when we shall, I believe, harmonize in opinion as it respects the most essential, and most important articles of belief, and shall both approve or disapprove the same general course of conduct. Our sentiments and practices will both, in a very short time, be brought to the solemn test. They will pass through a trial which no art can elude, nor force prevent, and from which there can be no appeal. And if a death-bed do not remove our errors, so far as to convince us each of the same general theory; the clear irresistible light of eternity will undoubtedly effect it.

"Suffer your brother, whose anxious, longing heart, feels solicitous for your welfare, to expostulate with you a little upon the vastly interesting concerns of a future world. You are not requested to lay aside your reason, but to exercise it. You are not desired to receive any proposition as truth upon the mere *ispse dixit* of another, but to do yourself the justice candidly to weigh the evidence, and to yield to the decision which reason, unbiassed,

uncorrupted, necessarily forms in view of truth. Could you be prevailed upon to do this, (and surely not to do it must leave a conviction, and consciousness of the most egregious folly,) there would remain no doubt of a speedy alteration in your sentiments and practice.

"I make the appeal to reason—I go farther, I appeal to yourself, and am willing to hazard the result upon the decision of your own mind, if you will not stifle, or conceal the conviction of your own understanding. Has it not the approbation of reason, to conduct us, strangers on the earth, and candidates for eternity? Is it an apostacy from wisdom to treat eternal concerns as vastly more important and interesting than those of a temporal nature? Is it an aberration from true dignity or greatness, to pay a serious respect and reverence to the name and worship of the Almighty? Is it a breach of propriety or deviation from refinement, to revere and worship our Maker? Does it discover a more refined, more noble, or more exalted mind, to live without God in the world? To treat his holy name with irreverence, and his worship, with neglect? Does the great Sir Isaac Newton in your opinion betray his *weak side*, in his sincere attachment to christianity? Does the name of chief justice Hale appear to you contemptible, on account of his scrupulous observance of the holy Sabbath, and conscientious regard to all the duties of piety? Does Mr. Boyle sink in your esteem, because he

felt such a profound respect for that immense Being, whom we call God, as to induce a solemn pause, whenever he was about to utter his tremendous name?

"I venture to say what answer you must inevitably give to these interrogatories, would you only allow yourself a few moments of serious reflection. If you would not shut your eyes against the light, and believe your own conscience, you would most certainly conclude in favor of religion. Do not say that I speak with too great an air of assurance. It is a plain case, level to the lowest capacity. The reasonableness of religion is so apparent, and the folly of irreligion so strikingly manifest, that it is not possible for an unbiassed mind, which attends to evidence, and is prepared to decide according to truth, to embrace a conclusion unfavorable to the former, but consonant to the latter. And would your inclination suffer you to live agreeably to the dictates of your own understanding, you would certainly assume a religious character.

"O then let me entreat you with the anxious solicitude of an affectionate brother, seriously to weigh the consequences of your present conduct. You know that you must die, why then will you not employ a few solitary thoughts at least, upon the serious concerns of this solemn event? Why will you rush upon your own destruction in spite of all those vast and weighty considerations, which solicit your attention, and cry aloud forbear! Why will

you go counter to the decision of your own sober judgment, and refuse a compliance with the admonitory voice of conscience? You may, perhaps stifle the accusation of this internal monitor for a season; but, believe me, my brother, your triumph will be short, your peace of no considerable duration. Conscience will soon awake. She will have a hearing, 'Your leave unask'd.'"

During the period of his stay at college, Mr. Rice still maintained a high sense of obligation to God. In view of the divine purity, and his own daily imperfections he sometimes yielded to depressing apprehensions concerning his own spiritual character. Referring to the labours to which he expected to consecrate his life, and the danger of deception, he thus writes to his brother:

"I apprehend that unconverted men may in some instances be useful preachers. This opinion appears to be confirmed, by those striking and very solemn words of the Saviour. "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" Matt. vii. 22. These will probably be such as have really been useful, have not only entertained hope that they were friends of the blessed Jesus, but have labored, and perhaps have been quite zealous to promote religion. But how awful their mistake! and how distressing their disappointment; to be rejected of that Saviour, of whose kind embrace, and

gracious reception of them, they had entertained such raised expectations, such fond conceits, such lively hopes. Instead of this joyful welcome to his love, to hear that heart-rending sentence, 'Depart ye cursed?' How will that fearful word rive and pierce their ghastly souls! Oh! who can endure its intolerable pangs."

In other letters there is manifest the same jealous inspection of his own heart. Frequently he uses the most forcible language, when referring to the depravity of human nature, as he found it developed in the comparative weakness of his faith and love. Though he felt in a lively degree the constraining influence of a Saviour's compassion, and evinced strong desires after holiness of character; and though indeed he had attained an eminent measure of christian excellence, yet when he entered into a comparison of what he was, with what he ought to be, he entertained a painful sense of deficiency. Hence the self-loathing expressions he employs. This impression of personal unworthiness may serve, only to excite ridicule among such as have no spiritual discernment of God and his truth. But those who are borne of the Spirit are prepared to understand and bewail the deceit, and desperate wickedness of the heart. Beholding the incomparable excellence of Jehovah, and the spirituality of his law, they perceive by contrast the exceeding sinfulness of sin and are made to abhor it as they find it in their own character. "I am a man of

unclean lips;" was the confession of the inspired and devoted Isaiah, when he beheld the glory of the King, the Lord of hosts. Another servant of God, whose self-denial, fervent love, and untiring zeal, gave proof that he was honest in the sacred cause, was heard to exclaim, "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death;" and at the very time too, when he could say; "I delight in the law of God after the inward man."

Concerning the christian deportment of Mr. Rice, while pursuing his collegiate course, there remains the most pleasing evidence. The biographer has frequently received from an intelligent and pious member of the family in which he boarded, the most marked commendation of his piety. It was as regular as it was glowing. During meals and other intervals of leisure, the time was usually occupied in profitable conversation. Opportunities were embraced of giving personal warning to the impenitent, and of rousing to action the lukewarm, and formal professor; while occasionally he appointed and conducted social meetings for prayer in the neighborhood. These meetings were thought to have been of essential service to many.

Thus wherever he was found, whether within the college walls, in the family, or in the house of God, a habitual devotion to the glory of his Divine Master was manifest. All were struck with the uniformity of his character. His actions at all

times were rather the result of a solemn conviction of accountability to God, than of mere impulses of feeling. This was indicated by intercourse with those around him, and in all his correspondence by letter. In a communication addressed to his brother in 1809, he adverts to a habit of mind which we may judge was happily exhibited by himself.

"This," he remarks, "is a hurrying world, and those who would fulfil the part properly belonging to them, must be active. No moment passes but has its appropriate duty. More, however, is not required than there is a sufficiency of time for performing; hence, though diligence unremitting diligence, and vigorous activity are very proper and our indispensable duty, yet there is a kind of engagedness, and a hurry which are incompatible with that calmness and composure of mind, which religion, and reason unitedly inculcate. All hurry, indeed, which is incompatible with that gracious serenity of soul, which results from a proper attention to the divine government in all things, is evidently foolish and criminal. 'Be still, and know that I am God,' should keep creatures in a gracious tranquillity of mind.

This desirable frame is equally distant from negligent, unheeding inactivity, and that unpleasant hurry, disconcertion, and fluttering eagerness which, though violently active, hardly knows what to do next. Undoubtedly, we are most inclined to err on

the side of sloth and unconcern; the opposite extreme, however should be avoided. The instances indeed are not unfrequent, in which there is a zeal which is not according to knowledge. But in most of these cases, I apprehend, there is not, strictly speaking, too much zeal, or engagedness, but the fault is, misapplication, wrong direction, owing to mistaken views, or what is worse and too often the case, to a corrupt disposition. This remark I conceive admits of a general application. Worldly-minded persons, whose most anxious concern seems to be to gather riches, do not, perhaps, generally take too good care of their worldly interest; but they do this from wrong motives; it has too much of their hearts. And so of other cases which might be mentioned."

It has been intimated that the violent hostility of Mr. Rice's father, was one of the circumstances which contributed to his entrance into the ministry. He had now for some time been absent from the home of his childhood, yet early and fondly cherished attachment to his parents was not effaced from his heart. He loved them as ardently as ever. While at college, he ascertained that his parents were about to leave Northborough, being compelled to make sale of the estate which had long been in possession of the family. This was to him a source of deep affliction. In reply to the letter which announced the fact, he thus remarks:

Williams College, June 7, 1809.

DEAR BROTHER:—Inscrutable are the ways of Providence. Several years since, I formed a purpose to come into possession of that inheritance which father has now sold, and to take care of our parents in their declining years. To fulfil this office of filial duty, appeared to me on several accounts desirable. To have undertaken it, would have been perfectly congenial with my feelings. I felt, and still feel grieved to see parents neglected, as they are, I fear, in too many cases, by those children who have the care of them. There is not, I apprehend, generally manifested by children in such situations, that tenderness, affection, and kindness, in regard to their declining parents, which there ought to be. Perhaps it betrays great self-ignorance, to intimate the probability that I should do better in this situation than those who have had the experience of it. And perhaps, my past conduct is not the *best comment* upon such an intimation. I do, however, honestly (unless I greatly deceive myself) express what have been, and, indeed, what still are my feelings upon this subject. I even made a tune to these lines of Pope, which I used to sing at my solitary labors—

"Me let the tender office long engage,
To rock the cradle of declining age;
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,
And keep awhile, a parent from the sky."

CHAPTER IV.

INCREASED DESIRE FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE GOSPEL—ZEAL IN THE MISSION CAUSE—VIEWS ON FRENCH INFIDELITY—LETTERS ON EXPERIMENTAL AND PRACTICAL RELIGION—LICENSED TO PREACH—ENTERS ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY—SEVERE APPLICATION TO STUDY—STUDIES FRENCH AND SYRIAC—EDUCATION COMPLETED.

While at college, Mr. Rice was the subject of deep concern for the miserable condition of those who were without the gospel. The desires he cherished for the salvation of sinners before he left his father's house, inspired him, even then, with the purpose of doing all he could to extend the knowledge of a Saviour's love throughout the earth. This purpose was strengthened and matured within the walls of the institution, and before he closed his studies, he was ready at the bidding of his master, himself, to go to any part of the Pagan world.

The letter which follows, gives pleasing testimony of the zealous interest he felt in the mission cause. At that time no efforts had been made by the American churches to propagate the gospel in foreign lands. The object for which he proposed to collect funds, was the moral and spiritual improvement of the Indians of our country. The communication is addressed to his brother.

March 18*th*, 1811.

DEAR BROTHER:—I send you the enclosed constitution and address of the Massachusetts Missionary Society. My hope is that you will sign it, and use your endeavors to induce others to sign it also. Your becoming a member will be more serviceable than merely giving a donation yearly, equal to what the tax of membership would be. This will increase the substantial and corporate strength of the society, and this again will add to its weight and respectability of character; and this again will be likely to secure a further increase of members, and greater extent of influence. Did I deem it needful, I should apprehend it a duty to press this matter, as I could entertain no suspicion of giving offence in so doing. But can it be necessary? Can I do otherwise than conclude that you are as ready to use your influence to promote the missionary cause as I am to propose it? It is not necessary for me to urge this subject. The command to "preach the gospel to every creature," is still obligatory, and obligatory on the christian world in general. But certainly it does not become us to be supinely inactive. "What do ye more than others," still follows us. Nor can we compare our languor and negligence with the vigor and systematic zeal of the enemies of Zion, without blushing in view of the comparison. Must the children of this world always, and in every respect almost, be wiser in their generation than the children of light?

"But what shall be done? If there was some individual of respectable character in each town, who would take upon him to plead in behalf of Zion, and to *solicit* on her behalf, it is past a doubt with me, that much might be done. Such an individual might induce men to become members of some missionary society, and should take upon him the responsibility of collecting and remitting to the treasury the subscriptions of such members. He should also be at the trouble of procuring Magazines or other religious publications, for such as he might induce to take them. And he should also solicit contributions for the missionary fund. Such conduct would not probably be without considerable effect. Nor would the people be injured, though some of their property might thus be parted with; perhaps in some instances, it would in a sense be *extorted* from them. Nay, they would be benefitted; for "he that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay it."

"People are none the poorer for giving liberally to benevolent purposes. The liberal soul deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand. He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly, and so far as my observation and information on this subject extend, the more people are *addicted* to giving in such ways, the more ready they are to give more and more. Were such a measure extensively and systematically adopted, no doubt the effect would be great, and highly beneficial; and it

might be adopted, were it not for the lamentable coldness and supineness of christians. But though at present there is no hope that such a measure may become general, yet something may be done by individuals. And is not duty in the case extremely plain? I have here indicated as you may perceive, my dear brother, with freedom, though but briefly, and superficially, the course which I wish, *greatly* wish you to pursue. Having done this, I leave the rest to your discernment, benevolence, piety, and conscience."

In connection with the thoughts expressed above, it may not be improper to introduce some suggestions in regard to a sentiment then beginning to prevail very extensively in the United States. The philosophy of the French school at one time threatened serious mischief to our institutions, and to our national honour, as well as to the individual happiness of our countrymen; the reader therefore, cannot fail to commend the judicious observations made by the subject of this memoir. On this topic, he manifests much judgment and foresight. A manly indignation was excited, that these senseless and lascivious doctrines should, for a moment, find currency among our citizens, and especially with any of acknowledged intellect and influence. As a *christian* philosopher, he discovered not only the folly of the scheme, but its desolating moral tendencies; and though comparatively young, he feared

not to lift his warning voice and sound an alarm. In a letter written in 1811, he remarks—

"I have lately been reading 'Smith on the Prophecies.' I think he has improved upon Mr. Faber considerably. I am sure you will be pleased with it. And should you purchase a volume, which you may do in Boston, perhaps you would never regret it. The second chapter I think, must operate favorably in a political point of view. If pious people will look at the evidence which is there exhibited of the progress of French atheism in our country it must fill their minds with painful, alarming apprehensions. Nor can I easily persuade myself that they will; I see not, indeed, how they *can* continue attached to a government so much evidently under the influence of Bonaparte—of French atheism! Taking human nature as it is, we can pretty readily account for it, that delusion has made such awful progress in our country, and that even some pious men should be led on, hoodwinked with the multitude. Such were the cruelties of the British in the war, and such at that time, the kindness of the French, that a hatred of the English, and love of the French was fixed in their minds.

"Through their baleful influence, they view every thing still in regard to each nation with prejudice. This, with other very powerful causes, fastens and perpetuates their miserable delusions. The only antidote to this fatal poison, is correct information. Could the real substantial evidence of undisguised

fact, penetrate the fatal tissue which has so long entwined and shrouded their understandings, their cure would be effected. Let pious people know what the English, for a course of years, have been doing in the cause of religion and humanity, the exertions of their missionary societies to extend the blessings of the gospel to the heathen nations, and they will be much softened in their feelings towards the English; their prejudice and hatred will insensibly lose their grasp.

"Let them at the same time have a view of the horrid operations of atheism in France; the extensive plans for the absolute destruction of christianity; the hellish ingenuity and success with which their secret machinations are conducted; know that the French government is essentially atheistic in principle, that it has atheistic clubs completely subservient to its views; that there are many secret societies of atheists in the United States; that their destructive plans, though unseen, are ripening for execution; that retired from general observation, they are forging chains, with which, with invisible hands, they intend to bind the world. Let them open their eyes upon this monster; surely the appalling view must shock their very souls."

Two or three extracts of letters will now be inserted, expressive of his sentiments on subjects connected with experimental and practical religion. They evince growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Having

referred to the declensions to which professing christians are subject, he proceeds: "Oh! for an all conquering faith—to enliven desire—to chase away stupidity, and to give efficacy to prayer. But what should we do when we feel stupid and cold? Should we sit still, complaining? Let us labour to enter into that rest, lest any of us fall after the example of unbelief. Let us not sit still complaining that we are so cold that we cannot work; but let us arouse, shake off our fetters, and set about our labour, doing with our might whatsoever our hands find to do. And ye, beloved, build yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

"I believe with Newton that there is a scriptural distinction between grace and comfort. He observes, that to maintain a hatred of sin, and to hold on in the path of duty, when we have but little comfort, may be a more certain evidence of grace, than many things we may either do or avoid when the frame of our spirits is more happy. Baxter would have christians spend more thought about their duty than their comforts. Be careful to study and practise duty, and leave it with God what measure of comfort to bestow. And instead of anxiously doubting whether they have any grace at all, spend their time in getting more grace. Upon this principle, it seems that doubts are sinful, being

increased because encouraged. We must resist the devil in order to make him flee from us." On another occasion, he thus writes:

November 7th, 1811.

"DEAR AUNT:—I have but a moment to write, yet cannot refrain from sending a few lines, as an opportunity presents of conveying them immediately. I regret that I could spend no longer time with you when I was at your house. Should I ever have the pleasure of calling again, I hope to be able to tarry longer. But whether we are allowed to meet again on earth or not, may we be prepared to meet in heaven; if we may have hope of this, surely it is of little consequence about the things of this present evil world; rather let me say, if we may have grace to submit unreservedly to the will of our heavenly father, to be always really engaged in his delightful service, we may say with good old Jacob, 'It is enough.'

"Little do we know what is before us in life. It is an eventful day in which we live. The plan of God is rolling on. Its results will be glorious, be awful. Saints will be purified, and received to everlasting blessedness; sinners will perish in total despair! And yet how unconcerned are most people, respecting these tremendous affairs. Many indeed, are zealous for God, engaged in disseminating the truth as it is in Jesus. But alas, many more are zealous, it is to be feared, in propagating delusion. There are many deceivers, and many

deceived; the old serpent is playing his mischievous game of treachery and falsehood, with but too fatal success in our miserable world. The more my acquaintance with mankind is extended, the more my impressions of the total and desperate depravity of the heart are deepened; the more my fears that many who make pretensions to religion, are deceiving themselves. Satan transforms himself into an angel of light; his ministers, into ministers of righteousness; counterfeited appearances are taken for real grace; the love of self, for the love of God.

"I do greatly fear that the love of many is founded in selfishness. They love God or Christ, because they think he intends to save them. But surely, if an apprehension that we are likely to be saved, is the reason of our loving God, it is easy to detect the entire selfishness of such love. Christ himself has furnished the test, by saying, 'sinners love those that love them.' But whoever is deceived, whoever fails of the grace of life, still the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. God will glorify himself, either in our salvation or condemnation. But let us present our whole selves 'a living sacrifice unto him, that we may be vessels of mercy prepared unto glory.' Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Mr. Rice was licensed to preach by the Mountain Association, Berkshire county, Massachusetts.

A period was now reached, to which, for several years, he had been looking forward with feelings of intense interest. To preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God, was, in his estimation, an employment of incomparable importance, and to go forth in this work with the approbation of his brethren, constituted the chief desire of his heart. It had been, however, determined by him before he engaged wholly in the ministry, to spend some time at the Andover Theological Seminary, which had just then gone into operation. With the concurrence and recommendation of the President of the College, he joined the class at Andover, in the middle of his last collegiate year. By this arrangement, a year was gained between the two institutions; so that those who graduated a year before him at the college, were in the same class with him at the Theological School. It was necessary, however, that he should sustain an examination in the whole course of studies, the same as if the usual time had been occupied. This was true, both in regard to the college, and to the Theological institution.

Such an arrangement demanded the severest application to study, in the midst of which, there was reason to apprehend the prostration of his physical powers. During the winter of 1810–11, he suffered much with pain in the chest, and general languor. His studies, however, were not intermitted. "I do hope," he says in a letter written about

that time, "that as the spring opens, my health will be confirmed, that I may pursue with increasing ardor and delight, studies, of whose importance my mind is constantly occupied with an increasing conviction." Such was the conception entertained of the magnitude of that office, in which he was to engage for life, that he could not be willing to pass through the necessary training, without giving himself entirely to its influence. Although he had long panted to become a herald of the glad tidings, yet the varied knowledge of men and things, and especially of the sacred oracles necessary to commend the truth to every man's conscience, he determined to obtain. With small attainments, he was not satisfied, and therefore, the most rigid economy was practised, while his powers of mind were tasked to the utmost. "I cannot," he remarks to his brother, "easily bring my mind to harbor the idea of intermitting my studies, so long as I am any way able to prosecute them. So far from suffering any abatement, even when health from day to day declines, my eagerness for acquisition increases. Instead of diminishing, I am constrained to enlarge in the objects of attention.

"Lately, I have begun the study of the French language, and also of the Syriac. Do you ask, wherefore? With respect to the French, not to mention the frequent quotations of it, and the many valuable books in it, which I may wish to read, possibly, and indeed, not very improbably. I may,

some time, be in a situation to need this language for actual communication, with those who speak it. With respect to the Syriac, it is important as a source of biblical criticism; the more so, since the manuscripts have come to light, which Dr. Buchanan has discovered in the East, written in that language.

"In addition to every other inducement which impels the anxious desire to grasp an extensive fund of erudition, the painful consciousness of the very scanty pittance which I have as yet obtained, forms one of no inconsiderable weight. When I survey the acquisitions which some have made; and those too, who seem to have been actuated by no better principle than such as may be found in the unsanctified heart, I am at once inflamed with an ardour, which is almost overwhelming, to make advances in science."

Having sustained a good examination at the close of the term in September, 1811, he received a regular dismission from the Seminary, with a view to the entire devotion of his life to the ministry, and, as we shall hereafter perceive, especially to the work of missions.

It ought to be stated, that during the prosecution of his regular academical studies, he usually devoted his vacations to teaching schools, by which, he not only obtained a portion of the means necessary to complete his education, but also became more thorough in the branches he taught.

CHAPTER V.

ORIGIN OF MODERN MISSIONS IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA—EARLY FEELINGS OF MR. RICE ON THIS SUBJECT—SOCIETY OF INQUIRY ON THE SUBJECT OF MISSIONS FORMED AT WILLIAMS COLLEGE—TERMS OF ADMISSION—FIELDS OF LABOUR CONTEMPLATED—SOCIETY ORIGINATED AT ANDOVER SEMINARY—MR. JUDSON'S FEELINGS AND DETERMINATIONS IN REFERENCE TO MISSIONS—RESOLUTIONS OF SEVERAL TO GO TO SOME FOREIGN FIELD—MEMORIAL TO GENERAL ASSOCIATION—AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS FORMED—IMPEDIMENTS TO MR. RICE'S DEVOTION TO MISSIONARY LABOUR—THESE DIFFICULTIES REMOVED—ORDINATION—SAIL FOR INDIA—ARRIVAL AT CALCUTTA—SICKNESS—OTHER TRIALS.

THAT magnificent results, both in the natural and moral world, are often to be traced to apparently unimportant circumstances, is a trite remark. Its very triteness, however, proves it to be true. It is usually the fact that God works in this way. In the unfoldings of his will, he does not so much surprise by the direct, sudden exertion of his omnipotence; but operates through second causes, and by a gradual process; yet, in such a manner as ultimately to call forth the homage of grateful adoration. It is seen that while he condescends to employ human instrumentality, he is not dependent upon it, because he chooses the weak things of the

world, and things that are not in the accomplishment of his purposes.

In this respect, it is pleasing to review the history of modern missionary operations in both hemispheres.

That mighty influence which British christians are now exerting on many portions of the Pagan world, had its origin in the little band, of which Carey was the master spirit. When he came from his retirement, and with this motto inscribed upon his banner, "expect great things, attempt great things;" there was commenced a system of offensive war against the strong-holds of superstition and moral darkness, which is to result in their entire overthrow. If we look back on the history of this benevolent work among the American churches, the eye beholds a similarly gratifying spectacle. A few young men at college were accustomed to meet in secret, to converse on the condition of the heathen world, to devise methods of sending out the gospel, and especially, to invoke the direction of the God of missions.

From that praying circle, emanated most of those grand enterprises in this country, which are filling the earth with gladness, and extending the empire of the Son of God.

Of that little circle, the subject of this memoir constituted a prominent member. Some difference of opinion has existed, respecting priority of claim to the honour of originating the project of an Ame-

rican mission to the East. In the discussion of this subject in various periodicals, there has been allowed an undue excitement of feeling. Of vital importance, it certainly cannot be, even should the claim in favor of any one be established. It is probable, that He who inspired the bosoms of these young men with the holy impulse to bear the news of salvation to distant lands, began in them the work contemporaneously, Or, if in his infallible wisdom, he selected any one as the projector, it may be left among the hidden things, to be revealed in that world where envyings and unholy emulations are unknown. In alluding to the earliest feelings of interest on this subject, with Mr. Rice, a strict adherence to facts will be maintained, according to the data furnished by his letters and other sources.

A communication from him will here be inserted, in which he recommends to the attention of a friend the subject of missions, and endeavors to enlist his sympathies in behalf of pagan lands. It is in reply to inquiries respecting the best method of doing good in the cause of Christ. The magazine referred to, was a periodical which was principally devoted to missions in our own country. He thus remarks:—

"In giving you my thoughts upon the subjects which you have proposed, I will suggest a way in which it appears to me you may render some important and acceptable service to your blessed

Saviour; leaving it however, to yourself to determine, in the exercise of a prayerful temper, what your duty is in your particular circumstances.

"I have, for some time, viewed the missionary interest as being inexpressibly important. Infinitely important, because the salvation of many immortal souls seems to be suspended upon it. There seems to be no other way in which the gospel can, according to the present constitution of Divine Providence, be conveyed to the numberless millions of poor perishing heathen, but by missionary labors. I do not mean by this remark, to limit the holy one of Israel. None will doubt that God *can* convert the heathen nations by an immediate exertion of his Almighty power, without using means or instruments. With infinite ease can Almightiness effect whatever infinite wisdom and goodness dictate to be done. But is this the way in which Deity has determined to spread the gospel of his glorious grace? What has been his manner of operation heretofore? Very evidently has he worked by means and instruments.

"When a faithful and zealous missionary was needed, to "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;" by an astonishing display of sovereign grace, he converted the zealously persecuting Saul, and sent him upon this important business. And, if in those days, there were need of missionaries, or, in other words, evangelists, to go forth among the heathen preaching to them the

gospel of peace, which bringeth salvation, it is not less necessary and important for missionaries to be sent among them *now* in order to their conversion and salvation.

"This seems also to be fully evident from the holy Scriptures. The great apostle, and as I may so say, missionary of the Gentiles, reasons thus: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" Is not this reasoning applicable to the case we are considering? Does it not fully establish the propriety and vast importance of missionary labors? And does it not follow as a necessary and unavoidable consequence, that it is the duty, the indispensable duty of christians, to use their most vigorous exertions to encourage and promote missionary interests? Let them, therefore, awake from their slumbering and sloth. Let them be all alive in the cause of the blessed Immanuel. Let them feel a tender solicitude for the salvation of their fellow sinners. And let those who dare to speak against the missionary interests beware, lest they be found to arraign the providence of God, to make objections directly in face of his holy word; or, "lest haply they be found to fight even against the eternal Jehovah."

You desire, my friend, to do something for your Redeemer. Agreeably to my promise to suggest a

way whereby you may accomplish, in some measure, what you desire, let me ask, can you not by some means, afford assistance to some missionary society. You are acquainted with the Massachusetts Missionary Magazine. You are sensible that an extended circulation of this publication, would considerably aid the benevolent design of the society. Is it not in your power to do something for the society by using your influence to enlarge the circulation of this magazine? I am not fully acquainted with your circumstances, but I conjecture they are such, that you may be useful in this way. I am satisfied for myself, that the magazine might be much more extensively circulated were there suitable exertions made use of for this purpose; and it appears to me, an object of sufficient magnitude to claim the attention, not only of each member of the society, but of every individual in the christian public who feels interested in the success of the gospel.

"I cannot but wish that there were one or more persons in every town, who would use their exertions in this, or if they could discover some better way to assist the missionary cause, and thus do something towards spreading the glorious gospel of the grace of God. I have known the exertions of a single individual avail, to gain more than a dozen subscribers, in a town, where probably, there would not otherwise, have been a single one taken. How much then might probably be done in this way, and

in various other ways, to promote religion, if christians were not criminally wanting in exertion? Nay, my friend, who can say how much good you yourself may effect, by the blessing of God, upon your prudent, persevering, and vigorous endeavors? No labor can be lost that is done with a sincere view to glorify God, and enlarge the boundaries of his holy kingdom.

"Be careful to act always from a sense of duty, and from a conviction that you are under the immediate inspection of the great God who will shortly summon you before his awful tribunal, upon which solemn occasion, every work must be brought into judgment with every secret thing, whether good or bad. Be penitent and humble, and wait upon God in fervent prayer, and he will grant you that wisdom which is profitable to direct. May God of his infinite mercy shed abroad his light and love in our hearts, and teach us to know and do his holy will."

Before his entrance into college, he was the subject of deep solicitude for the salvation of the heathen, frequently referring in his conversation, to their miserable state. It is not certain that any distinct impressions of personal obligation to labor among the heathen were entertained, until he commenced his collegiate studies in 1807. That very soon after this, such impressions were indulged, is clear, from statements made by his brother, then his most intimate correspondent, and from his own

declaration, frequently made in after life. Said he, a little subsequently to his entrance into college, "I have deliberately made up my mind to preach the gospel to the heathen," and added, "I do not know but it may be in Asia." At this time, Samuel J. Mills, James Richards, and or two others of kindred spirit, were members of the institution, and with them a free interchange of thought and feeling on this subject, was indulged in, producing a regard, mutual, tender and lasting.

These young men as before hinted, frequently met to consult on this interesting topic. The following questions were brought distinctly before their minds. Whether it was not a solemn duty of those who have light, to transmit it to those who have it not? And if so, whether it was not obligatory on some individual disciples to be the bearers of this light? Deciding this in the affirmative, it was still farther inquired, upon whom does the obligation rest? These inquiries led them to the deliberate conclusion, that under the divine direction and with the divine blessing, they would give themselves to labor for Christ in heathen lands. They saw, indeed, no immediate prospect of effecting their designs. The particular field to which they might go, and the method of operation, were to them alike unknown; yet, pledging themselves to God, and to one another in this holy compact, they entertained no doubt, that he who had thus far led them, would guide into the path of usefulness.

More effectually to carry out their designs, these young men formed themselves into a "Society of Inquiry on the subject of Missions," allowing no one to be connected with the association who was not understood to be pledged to the support of this enterprise. Each member was expected to give himself to the work, by bearing in person the word of life to pagan lands. All their sessions were held in secret. No one, not even their nearest friends, were apprised of the existence of the Society. In their meetings, which were regularly convened, they introduced for consideration, the various portions of the globe which were supposed to be most accessible, contemplating their peculiar moral condition, their manners and customs, with whatever might constitute peculiar obstacles in the way of successful effort. These too, were seasons of special prayer. *Together, they drew near to God.* Their desires for more of the spirit of Christ, and for divine guidance were unitedly presented, while they encouraged and stimulated each other in the holy race they had begun. They also kept up a personal intercourse with such in the college, and corresponded with such at a distance, as might be supposed to sympathize with them in these feelings of entire consecration to the cause of Christ. Whenever an individual was found ready to employ his life among the heathen, he was admitted into the Society.

The fields of missionary labor chiefly contemplated by this association, were those portions of our country occupied by the Indians, Greenland, the islands of the Pacific, the West Indies, and sometimes, the regions of the East, with the north of Europe. Nothing definite however, was determined on for the first two or three years. In their convocations, Mr. Rice was an active member, and contributed not a little to increase the devotion and to strengthen the purposes of his brethren. In a letter written to his brother in the early part of 1809, he thus refers to his own feelings on the question of consecrating himself to the work of missions.

My Dear Brother:—Your letter of February 23d, I received, and now thank you for it. Your remarks on the object I have in view, should God spare my life a few years, are perfectly coincident with my own reflections upon the subject. I feel vastly inadequate to the solemn undertaking; but still cannot relinquish it. And I have this great consolation: God often chooses the weak things of this world to confound those which are mighty. He always makes use of such instruments, as will most evidently manifest that the power is all of himself. He will certainly have all the glory. It appears to be duty for some to carry the knowledge of Christ to the benighted heathen. The gospel must, sooner or later, be preached to all nations. The heathen are the inheritance of our blessed Sa-

viour; of this inheritance he will surely take possession. In bringing to pass this glorious event, he undoubtedly uses men as instruments to bear his precious name to benighted tribes. In this blessed work I hope one day to be engaged. To separate entirely (as probably will be the case) from all my earthly relations, will, indeed, be painful. But of how much weight can this be, when balanced against the destruction of immortal souls? For this separation, I wish you would endeavor to prepare our mother, by suggesting occasionally, such considerations as the subject naturally furnishes. Her feelings will, no doubt, be strongly against my going to the heathen, and her feelings in the case, I cannot, I ought not, wholly to disregard."

In another letter written in the latter part of the same year, he expresses similar feelings, and the "hope that a sovereign God intends to send him forth into some part of the heathen world."

It is a remarkable coincidence, and furnishes satisfactory evidence of a special influence from above, that about this time, feelings of a similar character were indulged by two or three young men, then pursuing a course of theological study Andover. Nor does it appear that they had received any intelligence of the state of things at Williams College. The first individual at Andover who became the subject of this influence, was Adoniram Judson. In his earliest impressions, he found no sympathy among the members of the institution;

those who were afterwards his companions in this holy enterprise, had not then joined the theological class. They entered shortly after, and having mutually divulged their feelings, and receiving soon an accession of one or two from Williams College, they formed a branch "Society of Inquiry," which, like the other, was for some time kept from the knowledge of all who were not members.

It will doubtless be gratifying to the reader, to receive a particular reference to some of these facts, as they have been furnished from the pen of Mr. Judson himself. They are contained in a letter addressed to Mr. Rice, in reply to some inquiries which had been made on the subject. The following is an extract:

"My Dear Brother Rice:—You ask me to give you some account of my first missionary impressions, and then of my early associates. Mine were occasioned by reading Buchanan's Star in the East, in the year 1809, at the Andover Theological Seminary. Though I do not now consider that sermon as peculiarly excellent, it produced a very powerful effect on my mind. For some days, I was unable to attend to the studies of my class, and spent my time in wondering at my past stupidity, depicting the most romantic scenes in missionary life, and roving about the college rooms, declaiming on the subject of missions. My views were very incorrect, and my feelings extravagant; but yet I have always felt thankful to God for bringing me

into a state of excitement, which was, perhaps, necessary in the first instance, to enable me to break the strong attachments I felt to home and country; and to endure the thought of abandoning all my wonted pursuits, and animating prospects. That excitement soon passed away, but it left a strong desire to prosecute my inquiries, and to ascertain the path of duty.

"It was during a solitary walk in the woods, behind the college, while meditating and praying on the subject, and feeling half inclined to give it up, that the command of Christ, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,' was presented to my mind with such clearness and power, that I came to a full decision, and though great difficulties appeared in my way, resolved to obey the command at all events. But at that period, no provision had been made in America, for a foreign mission, and for several months after reading Buchanan, I found none among the students who viewed the subject as I did, and no minister in the place or neighborhood, who gave me any encouragement; and I thought I should be under the necessity of going to England, and placing myself under foreign patronage.

"My earliest missionary associate was Nott, who, though he had recently entered the seminary, (in the early part of 1810,) was a member of the same class with myself. He had considered the subject for several months, but had not fully made

up his mind. About the same time, Mills, Richards, and others joined the seminary from Williams College, where they had for some time, been in the habit of meeting for prayer, and conversation on the subject of missions; but they entered the junior class, and had several years of theological study before them. You were of the same standing, but from some engagement (a school I believe) did not arrive so soon, though you ultimately finished your course before the others, and joined the first party that embarked. Newell was the next accession from my own class.

"As to Hall, he was preaching at Woodbury, Conn. I heard that he once thought favorably of missions, and wrote him a short letter. He had just received a call to settle in that place, and was deliberating whether it was his duty to accept it or not, when the letter was put into his hand. He instantly came to a decision, and the next rising sun saw him on the way to Andover. I think that he arrived about the time of the meeting of the General Association of Ministers, at Bradford, in the summer of 1810. I do not, however, recollect him present at that meeting, nor was his name attached to the paper which was presented to the association, and which was originally signed by Nott, Newell, Mills, Rice, Richards, and myself; though, at the suggestion of Dr. Spring, your name and Richards', which happened to stand last, were

struck off, for fear of alarming the association with too large a number.

"I have ever thought that the providence of God was conspicuously manifested in bringing us all together from different and distant parts. Some of us had been considering the subject of missions for a long time, and some but recently. Some, and indeed, the greater part, had thought chiefly of domestic missions, and efforts among the neighboring tribes of Indians, without contemplating abandonment of country, and devotement for life. The reading and reflection of others, had led them in a different way; and when we all met at the same seminary, and came to a mutual understanding on the ground of *foreign missions* and *missions for life*, the subject assumed in our minds, such an overwhelming importance and awful solemnity, as bound us to one another, and to our purpose more firmly than ever. How evident it is, that the spirit of God had been operating in different places and upon different individuals, preparing the way for those movements which have since pervaded the American churches, and will continue to increase, until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his anointed."

Referring to this eventful period in a letter to a friend, Mr. Rice observes: "After the Society of Inquiry at Andover, was well established, the views of the brethren were turned very much towards the East. Judson was the first, as far as I know,

who mentioned Burmah. He had read Buchanan's "Star in the East," his "Christian Researches in Asia," and "Captain Simon's Embassy to Ava." He insisted that the East afforded much the widest and most promising field for missionary exertions, and that the path of duty led in that direction. Six months after Mills and Richards joined the Theological Institution at Andover, it occurred to me (always pushing forward) that by leaving half a year behind at college, and joining half a year in advance at Andover, I could save a year between the two; and yet, by diligent application, accomplish the studies, so as to sustain the requisite examinations with my class-mates in both institutions, which, with the concurrence of the president, and his recommendation, was carried into effect, and I became connected with those at Andover, who were a year before me at Williams College. Here, I became acquainted with Judson; but chiefly in the meetings of the secret society, as he was but little at Andover after I entered that seminary.

"In June, 1810, Gordon Hall, who had been preaching for some time, and who had been invited to become the pastor of a church in Connecticut, came to Andover to consult with the professors, whether he ought not to hold himself devoted to missionary labor among the heathen. (O! how I love to trace important results to minute incidents.) It happened to be but a day or two before the meeting of the General Association of all the evangelical

part of the ministers of Massachusetts, at Bradford, where the parents of Ann Haseltine lived, ten miles from the Institution, in Andover.

The coming, and object of the coming of Hall, so enlivened the missionary sentiments and feelings, particularly in the bosoms of the members of the Society, that Judson immediately wrote the memorial which you see in the memoirs of Mrs. Judson, addressed to that body of ministers, which was subscribed in the first instance, Adoniram Judson, Jr. Samuel Nott, Jr. Samuel J. Mills, Samuel Newell, James Richards, Luther Rice. The last two names were subsequently taken off from a fear that the appearance of so many under such impressions of mind, when nothing had been previously known of this matter, not even by the professors, whose pupils thus suddenly burst forth in an attitude so peculiar, should create something of the nature of alarm, as if some kind of fanaticism had seized the minds, all at once of the young ministers.

"The association appointed a committee, to whom the memorial was referred, and who reported favorably; in consequence, nine commissioners were appointed by the same body, five of Massachusetts, and four of Connecticut, who met in Connecticut in September of the same year, and formed the constitution of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This body, which thus emanated from that little secret society of youth, formed at Williams College, in 1807, (of which I esteem it

the happiest point in all my life to have been one of the original members,) now embraces the entire Congregational and Presbyterian denomination, and employs from a hundred and fifty thousand to two hundred thousand dollars annually, in their missionary exertions. From this, arose the Baptist General Convention, formed in 1814; and since, more or less distinctly out of the same range of evangelical influence, the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the Baptist General Tract Society, the Columbian College, the Newton Theological Institution, and I know not how many other things of more or less importance. Glory be to God! attempt great things—expect great things."

The above extract brings the reader to an important crisis in the history of Mr. Rice. While none can fail to perceive the leadings of an all-wise providence in these events; it is interesting to note the prevailing sentiments which animated his bosom, and impelled him forward in the almost untried path he had begun to tread. It was not the spirit of mere worldly adventure, nor the impetuosity of deluded, blinded fanaticism; the former did not actuate him, for wordly interests were about to be surrendered; and too much soberness of calculation had been indulged to allow the latter.

The great principle by which he was moved, derived its existence from heaven, and was first exemplified in the character of Christ, who, "though he was rich for our sakes, became poor, that we

through his poverty, might be rich." It was the principle of disinterested philanthropy. He saw the world in ruins. His divine master had proposed a plan of recovery, and commanded that this plan should be promulged to the ends of the earth. A deliberate conviction of duty, gave birth to the purpose he had formed, and stimulated him to the fulfilment of his vows. He could not be thrown back by any impediments which carnal ease or worldly policy might throw in his way. Believing that the project was practicable, and indeed, that it was divinely originated, and would be divinely sustained, he cast all fear behind, and pursued his way. It was not material with him either, whether success at once crowned the effort. "The issues of patient and persevering industry," he remarked to his brother, "have been, in countless instances, truly astonishing. What object almost may not be accomplished, if pursued with a zeal which is determined upon success, and which, never for a moment, harbors the idea of abandoning its aim. The enemies of the cross are diligent and able in devising schemes, and indefatigable in their efforts to subvert the foundation of our hopes beyond the grave. Their adroitness, perseverance and energy are indeed, almost incredible. Nothing but the badness of their cause, and the omnipotence of the power against whom their hostility is directed, could deprive them of victory, and insure their final defeat and ruin; must the children of this

world always, and in every respect almost, be wiser than the children of light."

But to return to the narrative. Mr. Rice was not appointed at the same time with Judson and his companions. When Mr. Judson returned from England, having been sent thither to confer with the London Missionary Society, by the American Board of Commissioners, it was determined by the last named body, to send out, under their special patronage, the four young men whose names were signed to the petition. There were for a time, impediments in the way of Mr. Rice, which were likely to hinder him from joining his brethren in the work of preaching Christ to the heathen. One source of embarrassment to his own mind, consisted in a strong attachment, mutually indulged, between himself and a young lady of piety, and of highly respectable connections, and whose mind, long oscillated respecting her duty to leave this country. While he was deeply solicitous to engage in missionary labor, he felt alike unwilling to violate the sacred pledges which had been given to the object of his affections, and reluctant, even with her consent, to yield to a separation. For a time, he hoped she might be willing to share with him in the perils and privileges of the mission; but at length, a distinct negative was given to the question, releasing him from all engagements *with* her, provided he should determine to go. After many

painful thoughts on the subject, he resolved to take up the cross and deny himself.

He thus expresses his feelings on the subject immediately after Mr. Judson's return from England:

"Brother Judson has returned from Europe and filled our hearts at Andover with gladness. He was detained in France about three months, and finally obtained a passport for England. He arrived in London the day before the anniversary of the London Missionary Society; was very cordially received there, and after a stay of six weeks in that country, returned to America. He will embrace the first opportunity of a passage to India. The London Society have engaged to support four missionaries, if they please to go out from this country under their direction. Perhaps two only of the brethren will go at first, if an opportunity shall occur soon, under the direction of the London Society; and two or three others by the next opportunity, under the patronage of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

"The field for missionary labor in the East, is great; the call for missionaries, pressing, and the prospect of success, hopeful and animating to a very high degree. If I know my own feelings, dear brother, I wish was already in that country. However, what may be allotted for me in the determination of providence, I know not. At present,

my calculations, convictions, and feelings, point decisively towards missionary ground."

Writing to his brother about this time, he says: "During some parts of the year past, I have considerably hesitated upon this subject. Not for a moment, however, have I felt that it was not my duty to go on a mission. Various considerations have operated to induce hesitation and indecision; and frequently, the conflict in my breast has been exceedingly distressing. My missionary brethren have always conversed as if I was going with them; and I have rarely been able to hold for a moment, an opposite language. At times, duty has seemed to be clear, and I have felt devoted to this cause. Those seasons have been always happy ones. For some time past, my mind has been more than usually exercised upon this subject. The question, why shall I not go to the heathen? I have not been able to dispose of. But I hope the season of hesitation, of doubt and perplexity, is now past."

Relieved from the agitation and suspense created by the circumstances just referred to, another serious obstacle to the accomplishment of his wishes, presented itself in the limited resources of the Board to sustain him as their missionary. In the meantime, arrangements were making for the departure of his brethren to India. He could no longer smother the holy fire which was burning in his bosom, and although the probabilities were all unfavorable, he resolved to make a desperate effort, by appealing

to the sympathies of the Board, and offering himself as their missionary.

Speaking of the meeting at which he and his fellow-laborers were appointed, Mr. Judson remarks: "Brother Rice accompanied me to that meeting, and was perfectly ready to offer himself to the Board, but we thought it unadvisable, as he had expected to remain another year in the seminary His feelings, however, became warmer and stronger in the course of a few months, so that he took his dismission from the seminary, which the regulations then allowed, and a short time previous to our embarkation, petitioned the presidential committee for leave to join us. They gave him leave, on condition that he would occasion them no additional expense, but provide for his own outfit, and raise the money for his passage, With this hard condition, he cheerfully complied, and immediately started on horseback, and travelled day and night, though in the depth of winter, to raise the needful sum, and then hastened to Philadelphia to join the party which sailed from that port."

This statement is in conformity with the relation as given by Mr. Rice himself, written in a letter to a friend. He says: "This matter was adjusted only eleven days previously to the day of ordination. The presidential committee were not authorized to appoint or accept a missionary; and it was owing, therefore, entirely to an intenseness of feeling which could neither be restrained by myself,

nor resisted by the committee, that I was enabled to force my way through the almost insuperable difficulties of the case, so as to go to India at that time. I had to provide, by begging, the funds for my outfit, passage, &c. and all this in the space of nine days; for two of the eleven passed, before I learned that the day for ordination had been fixed upon. Three more were consumed in agonizing and successful, successful only, because agonizing efforts with the presidential committee, leaving only six days to provide the necessary funds. By the signal aid of Providence this was effected.

The ordination of Mr. Rice and his associates took place at the Tabernacle Church, Salem, Mass. on the 6th of February, 1812. This was a scene never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Its results will be felt in the well-being of distant tribes, and of remotest generations. Mr. Rice speaks of it in his journal, as being to him, an occasion most solemn and interesting, although he was worn down with fatigue and agitation of mind. Immediately after the ordination, he gave the parting hand to his brother Asaph, and the next day, was engaged in making preparations for his departure to Philadelphia, from which place the vessel was to sail for the East. In tearing away from the many dear friends, he represents himself as feeling most keenly, especially on account of the anguish of spirit exhibited by them; so that he

could adopt the language of the apostle: "What mean ye to weep and to break my heart," &c.

On the 14th of the month, he reached Philadelphia, and in company with Messrs. Hall and Nott, was engaged until the 18th, in making preparations for the voyage; especially in visiting ministers, and other benevolent individuals, and attending meetings for the purpose of awakening an interest on behalf of the mission cause. He refers in his diary, to a prayer meeting, of which public notice had been given, and which was very numerously attended by ministers of different denominations, and members of the various churches. The mission was most devoutly committed to the gracious care of the great head of the church, and a collection taken. He says: "The attention paid to the mission by the Philadelphians, and the deep interest they appeared to take in its success, excite emotions which language cannot well express. The most of the succeeding night I spent in writing letters."

He thus writes to his brother:—

PHILADELPHIA, *February* 15, 1812.

"DEAR BROTHER:—When I parted with you in Salem, I expected to sail from that place. It was determined that evening that I should come here, and that Mr. Newell should go in the Caravan, from Salem. This arrangement was made for the sake of Mrs. Judson; as she must otherwise have gone this long voyage without any female com-

panion. I passed through Northborough on Saturday, but being in the stage was not able to call on my friends. After much fatigue, I reached this place yesterday. I expect to go board the ship Harmony next Tuesday, for India. With pleasure I leave America, in the hope of carrying the gospel to those who are perishing for lack of vision. Whether I shall ever visit my native country again, is uncertain. The probability is, that I shall not. This is not material. Of very little consequence it must be where we are on earth, if we are prepared for a better world. Dear brother, let us keep heaven much in view."

They left Philadelphia on the 18th, in a packet, as the 'Harmony,' in which they were to sail to India, had previously dropped down to Newcastle. Many were assembled to witness their departure. The next day, they went on board the ship, but the wind not proving favorable, they did not sail until Monday, the 24th of the month, at which time they bade adieu to the land of christian privileges, and bore away towards the regions of idolatry, to occupy which, had long been an object of ardent desire and supplication. The missionary family consisted of Messrs. Johns, and wife; Lawson, wife and child; with Miss Chaffin, and their nurse, who had been sent out by the English Baptist Missionary Society, and Messrs. Hall, Nott, and Rice, of the American Board. Messrs. Judson and Newell,

with their wives, sailed from Salem on the 19th of the same month.

Nothing materially interesting occurred during the voyage. On the 8th of June, they arrived at the Isle of France, and remained there about twenty days. From interviews frequently had with Mr. Thompson, an English chaplain at that place, and the representations made by him, they were sometimes almost ready to decline the idea of a location in India, but felt it their duty to proceed on their voyage, and examine for themselves all the bearings of the question, by a personal observation of the difficulties in their way. On the 10th of August, they reached Calcutta, and having gone ashore, had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Judson, who, with the other missionaries on board the Caravan, had arrived about the middle of June. During the voyage from the Isle of France, the health of Mr. Rice was seriously affected; at the time of his arrival, he had become quite reduced and feeble.

While in Calcutta, the mission band were subjected to painful perplexities, arising from the stern opposition of the East India Company, and of the government, to the occupancy of any station within their jurisdiction. They had not long been there, when a peremptory order was issued for their return to this country, and afterwards, for their passage to England in the British fleet. But this order was evaded by the determination to take passage, as early as practicable, for the Isle of France, with

the hope of ascertaining from that point, some inviting field of labor which they might usefully occupy. In the meantime, Mr. Rice had been brought to the borders of the grave, by a painful and lingering disease of the liver. This sickness, in conjunction with the uncertainty of his future destination as a missionary of the cross, proved a severe trial to his faith. But he was not forsaken by his heavenly friend. Despondency was never indulged, not even in the darkest hour. He felt a perfect satisfaction in leaving all events under the control of infinite wisdom and love; believing that he was in the path of duty, and that all things would work together for good to him, and to the cause which he had espoused. "What may be before me," he remarks, in a letter written to his brother about this period, "through what scenes of difficulty and distress I may pass, or where I may find a fixed residence, should this be the case, I know not, nor am I anxious to know. To endeavor to extend the knowledge of Christ among the heathen, is undoubtedly right. It is the the Lord's, not mine to determine whether such endeavors shall be successful. To him would I cheerfully commit myself, my brethren, and the missionary cause."

CHAPTER VI.

CHANGE OF SENTIMENT—PREVIOUS CONTROVERSY ON THE SUBJECT OF BAPTISM—MR. AND MRS. JUDSON BAPTISED—LETTER ON THIS SUBJECT—LETTER TO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS—BAPTISM—OPPOSITION—DEFENCE OF MOTIVES AND CONDUCT—ALLUSION TO THIS SUBJECT BY MR. JUDSON—SEPARATION FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS—LETTER TO BROTHER.

We shall now refer to a circumstance, which, whether considered in itself, or in all its bearings, must be contemplated with peculiar interest. While in Calcutta, a change of sentiment took place in the mind of Mr. Rice on the subject of baptism. His earliest scruples in reference to infant sprinkling, occurred at Williams College, when the merits of the question were fully discussed between a Baptist friend and himself, in a series of written communications. His Baptist brother was a man of excellent sense, but far inferior to him in the advantages of education. Notwithstanding this, Mr. Rice has frequently acknowledged, that during the whole controversy, he felt himself utterly disqualified to refute the arguments of his opponent, and could not but be astonished that it should be so; as he had never before suspected the untenableness of his sentiments on this point. While he found himself unequal to the task of freeing the subject from em-

barrassments, his opinions were not changed. He determined to dismiss the matter, as one of the non-essentials of religion; supposing, that if he erred, he was associated in error with many learned and excellent men of various denominations. Had he then pursued his inquiries, none can doubt the result to which he would have been brought.

From these circumstances, a valuable lesson may be acquired. Those who adhere to the exclusive propriety of believers' immersion have nothing to fear from discussion. Whether we invite a plain, illiterate reader of the received version of the New Testament, to examine those passages which refer to baptism, and to place on them that construction which is most simple and natural; or, whether we unite with the most learned and skilful critics in ascertaining the mind of the spirit in the original Greek, we are alike gainers by the agitation of this subject. While, therefore, an unkind, illiberal spirit towards those who differ in sentiment, ought to be avoided, every Baptist should embrace favorable opportunities of inviting attention to this imperative and important command of Jesus Christ. There are thousands of excellent Pedo Baptists, who would at once comply with the will of their master in this particular, if their attention were arrested, and the spirit of honest investigation indulged.

It has been stated, that two English Baptist missionaries, Messrs. Johns and Lawson, were fellow passengers with him in his voyage to India. In his

journal, reference is made to a conversation with them on the subject of baptism, and to the fact, that he was employed in its investigation. There is, however, the clearest evidence, that he remained unconvinced on his arrival at Calcutta. Very soon after, he ascertained from Mr. Judson, that during his passage, his mind had been perplexed and unhappy, from the apprehension that he was yet living in disobedience of his master, in failing to be buried with him in baptism. On the first Lord's day in September, 1812, he and his wife were baptised by Dr. Carey. On the 17th of the same month, he preached his baptismal discourse, which was afterwards published. Respecting this, Mr. Rice remarks in his journal: "Attended chapel service in the forenoon; brother Judson's text was Matthew, 28, xix: 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,' &c. His object was to show, what is baptism, and to whom it is to be administered. I have some feeling and difficulty on this subject, which I find myself reluctant to disclose to my brethren; may the Lord himself, lead me in his own right way."

On the 11th of October, he states in his diary, that he entered into a free conversation with Messrs. Hall and Nott, on the subject of baptism, and stated to them frankly, the state of his own mind, and that some time was spent in special prayer for the divine direction. About this time, he makes frequent allusion to the subject, being almost constantly engaged in reading the New Testament, in prayer,

and in the examination of all the works to which he could have access, embracing too, every opportunity of conferring freely with his Pedo Baptist, and Baptist brethren. On the 12th of October, 1812, he thus writes to his brother Asaph:

"I have just mentioned that brother Judson has become a Baptist. As I have here with him considerable means for the purpose, I am endeavoring to investigate thoroughly, the subject of the sacred ordinance of baptism. What may be the result of these inquiries, I am not able, at present, to say; but from the progress already made, I conceive it to be *possible*, that a revolution in my own mind, similar to that which my dear brother and sister have experienced, may take place. Should this be the case, I shall, in all probability, go with them to Java. It would be peculiarly pleasing to me, to be associated with them in the mission; but my affection for them can by no means determine me to become a Baptist, without the conviction that Baptists are in the right; nor can I on the other hand, be deterred from conscientiously examining the subject, nor from following what really appears to be the truth; notwithstanding any unpleasant considerations attending such a change of sentiment in my situation. And it is a principle with me, that truth can be no loser by the most rigorous examination, provided that examination be conducted in the fear of God, with a sincere desire to know the truth, and a disposition to do his will. May the Lord

himself lead me in the way in which he would have me to go."

After much patient and laborious investigation, he, at length, yielded to the conviction of duty, and resolved to apply for baptism. In a letter to the Board of Commissioners, he thus apprises them of his change of sentiment. "The solemn and important ordinance of christian baptism, has presented itself to my mind in such an attitude, that I could not conveniently refrain from examining it. With very considerable means at command, I endeavored, I trust, with prayerfulness, and in the fear of God, and with no small impression of delicacy and high responsibility of my situation, to give it a careful and very serious examination. But it is with peculiar emotions, that I proceed to inform you, that in the result, I am compelled to relinquish a view of the sacred ordinance which I have formerly apprehended to be highly important. I am now satisfactorily convinced, that those only who give credible evidence of piety, are proper subjects, and that immersion is the proper mode of baptism."

He thus alludes to his baptism. "November 1st, 1812, was this day baptised into the name of the Holy Trinity. The Lord grant that I may ever find his name to be a strong tower, to which I may continually resort and find safety." This event, in connection with the baptism of Mr. and Mrs. Judson, excited strong disapprobation on the part of those by whom they had been sent forth. The

Board of Commissioners, in their annual report for 1813, express regret that their missionaries "had not examined the subject before they were in a situation peculiarly exposing them, as the case might be, to mistake impulses for arguments; and an act, in which there would be a show of wisdom, in will, worship and humility, for an indispensable effort of christian self-denial." The implication contained in this extract, is as unjust as it is unkind. The whole history of these transactions shows, that if ever men were driven to an indispensable effort of christian self-denial, unbiassed by any fears or partialities, except in reference to their divine Master, those men were Judson and Rice.

So far from being influenced by the English Baptist missionaries, to whom they had access after their arrival in India, the whole subject had undergone an investigation by Mr. Judson, during the passage; and shortly after he reached Calcutta, he was prepared to go forward in the path of obedience. The following sentences, contained in the preface to his India edition of the Sermon on Baptism, exhibit this fact. "The author of the following discourse, was, by education and profession, a Pedo Baptist. During his passage from America to India, in the spring of 1812, he began to doubt the truth of his former sentiments. After his arrival, and *before he communicated the exercises of his mind to any of the Baptist denomination,* he became convinced that the immersion of a profes-

sing believer into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is the only christian baptism."

In a letter addressed to the third church in Plymouth, Mass., with which he had been connected, he thus refers to the subject: "You will readily believe me, when I say, that on leaving my country, I little imagined that I should ever have become a Baptist. I had not, indeed, candidly examined the subject of baptism, but I had strong prejudices against the sect, that is every where spoken against.

"It was on board the vessel, in prospect of my future life among the heathen, that I was led to investigate this important subject. I was going forth to proclaim the glad news of salvation through Jesus Christ. I hoped that my ministrations would be blessed to the conversion of souls. In that case, I felt that I should have no hesitation concerning my duty to the converts, it being plainly commanded in Scripture, that such are to be baptised, and received into church fellowship. But how, thought I, am I to treat the unconverted children and domestics of the converts? Are they to be considered members of the church of Christ, by virtue of the conversion of the head of their family, or not? If they are, ought I not to treat them as such? After they are baptised, can I consistently set them aside as aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, until they are re-admitted? If they are not to be con-

sidered members of the church, can I consistently administer to them the initiating ordinance of the church?"

With respect to the change which was experienced by Mr. Rice, no doubt can be indulged, that it was preceded by the same prayerful and protracted investigation. The struggle between the convictions of truth and prejudice, was severe and desperate. He found himself exceedingly reluctant to break the denominational ties which bound him to so many of those, in whose piety, he had the fullest confidence, and to unite himself with a people to which had been comparatively a stranger. He knew too, that in the event of a change, he should, with many, subject his character to reproach, and no longer be recognized as the authorized missionary of the Board. While all the means of support would thus be cut off, he was entirely uncertain as to the measure of countenance which would be given to missionary operations by the Baptists. There was no earthly motive in favor of the change; every selfish consideration was against it. Under these circumstances, we might expect him to ponder well his steps, and to proceed no farther than the most solemn convictions of duty should require. During the progress of these investigations, he appeared as the advocate of infant baptism; whenever he conversed with Baptists, not allowing them to know the scruples which had

taken possession of his mind, until a short time previous to his requesting baptism.

The following extract from the pen of Mr. Judson, will be read with interest, as it throws additional light on this part of the biography. "Mr. Rice arrived in Calcutta about six weeks after those of us who sailed from Salem. At that time, I was deeply involved in the subject of baptism, which I had begun to investigate on board ship, and I soon learned, that some of the passengers from Philadelphia, were in a similar position, and that Mr. Rice had rather distinguished himself, by reading every thing within his reach, and manifesting uncommon obstinacy in defending the old system.

"Soon after my baptism, he came to live with me, in order to enjoy better accommodations than he found elsewhere. At first, he was disposed to give me fierce battle; but I held off, and recommended him to betake himself to the Bible and prayer. He did so, and lived much by himself, so that I seldom saw him, except at meals. But his inquiries, when we met, soon assumed that cool and solemn air, which left me no doubt, as to what would be the result of his investigation. His mind remained undecided throughout the month of September; so that, though perhaps, he expected to become a Baptist, he signed the joint letter of the brethren, which you allude to, as a thing of course; though that letter mentions my change of sentiment, as a 'try-

ing event,' and states the inexpediency of our laboring in the same missionary field. In the month of October, his mind became fully decided, and he was baptised on the first of November. In all this, I discover not the slightest inconsistency, though persons at a distance, and not acquainted with the circumstances, might make the desired discovery.

"Both Mr. Rice and myself, have been accused of changing our sentiments suddenly, prematurely, and, of course, through the influence of interested motives. The truth is, that a Pedobaptist examining the subject of baptism, though about convinced of the truth, is reluctant to communicate the real state of his mind, even to his nearest friends, lest he should finally re-settle in his old sentiments, and be ashamed to have it known that he ever had a serious doubt on the subject. The consequence is, that when he can hold out no longer, and the unexpected fact is thrust, perhaps unceremoniously into the faces of his friends, they all stand aghast, and are ready to ascribe his change to any other than an honest influence."

In a letter to his parents, dated November 2d, Mr. Rice, says: "Whatever may be the consequence of this change, as it respects the Board of Commissioners, and my numerous christian friends in America, I cannot say, nor am I very anxious about it, though by no means indifferent to public opinion, or insensible to the delicacy and serious responsibility of my situation; but let consequences

be what they may, I hope nothing shall deprive me of the consolation, resulting from a conscience void of offence. Yesterday, I was baptised by the Rev. Mr. Ward, and enjoyed the privilege of uniting with the Baptist church in Calcutta, in celebrating the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Supper. It was a comfortable day to my soul!"

In a subsequent communication, addressed to his brother, he thus gives vent to his feelings on this subject. "Little did I think, dear brother, when conversing with you respecting Mr. G., that I should so soon belong to the same denomination with him; a denomination, which I had thought, in no small degree, reprehensible for party feeling, and sectarian conduct. I now believe, that these things are not more justly chargeable to the Baptists, than other denominations of professed christians. It has, indeed, been no small trial to me to change my sentiments, in a situation so conspicuous and delicate, and so highly responsible; though I now conceive it to be a distinguished favor of Divine Providence."

These extracts furnish unequivocal evidence, that the subject of this memoir, was compelled to unite with the Baptists, by the stern demands of duty. He knew not, as he remarked, what would be the consequence, but he was willing to trust in the Lord, and do good, believing, that necessary guidance and support would be bestowed. Too many instances are found among the professed fol-

lowers of Christ, in which worldly policy or convenience, is allowed to control their minds, preventing, if not the performance of known duty, the investigation of its claims. A distinction is made between essentials and non-essentials, and if the former be complied with, it is considered quite pardonable to dispense with the latter. This spirit of compromise, is far from being consistent with the devotion which should be cherished by a soul, bought with the precious blood of Christ. It is the result of a selfishness, which would say, I am willing to do what is essential to secure heavenly bliss; rather than inquire, how shall I best please and honor him, who died for me and rose again? All must perceive, that the latter question, is that which should constantly press upon the conscience and interest the heart of one who justly contemplates his responsibilities to an infinitely gracious Redeemer. It may not be amiss here, to insert a letter addressed to the Board of Commissioners, in which, he makes a formal resignation, as their missionary. It was written just before his return to this country.

"*To the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions:*

"VENERABLE AND BELOVED:—Since the important moment which placed me under the protection and control of your venerated patronage, a change of sentiment, in relation to the sacred rite of baptism, having put it out of my power to render obe-

dience to a particular article of your very valuable instructions, I deem it my duty, and beg leave to make the following communication relative to this change.

"During my passage to India, in the ship Harmony, some authorities were brought to my notice respecting the signification of the word *baptiso;* particularly, some remarks from the pen of Dr. Campbell, which had not before, met my observation, were of a nature, that induced me to suspect sprinkling not to be a proper mode of baptising; at least, not so proper a mode as immersion. A wish also existed in my mind, to possess more clear and decisive proof in favor of baptising infants, than I found myself able, readily, to produce; and though I had previously considered the subject at large, with attention, I felt something like a necessity, of refreshing my mind with its evidences, and determined to give it a careful reconsideration as circumstances should be favorable to the purpose. The attention, however, which I actually bestowed upon it, pursuant to this determination, previously to landing in India, neither destroyed my suspicions respecting the propriety of sprinkling, as a mode of baptism, nor gave that entire satisfaction, or rather, that ready command of decisive proof, in favor of infants, as proper subjects of the rite, which I so much wished to possess, and had determined, if possible, to obtain.

"On reaching Calcutta, I was surprised, and sorry to learn, that brother Judson, as I immediately apprehended, from his conversation, and as proved true, in fact, was nearly prepared to declare himself a Baptist; and though this of itself, could neither augment nor diminish the difficulty, which was forming in my own mind, yet it contributed perhaps, to make that difficulty more distinctly and painfully perceptible to myself, and to strengthen the purpose of bestowing upon the subject, a serious reconsideration, as soon as circumstances should allow. But as my health had been considerably reduced during the latter part of my voyage, and was kept low and precarious by repeated attacks of illness, in Bengal; and as the concerns of the mission demanded all the attention which a state of threatening debility would permit me to exert, it was unavoidable to postpone this purpose for a while, though the subject began to create some degree of uneasiness in my mind. It was indeed, my desire to fix upon the place for the missionary station, as soon as practicable, and to proceed to that station without delay; and an early decision upon this point, by your missionaries, which, however, was afterwards recalled, and the unpromising state of my health, had determined me to return to the Isle of France, very soon after arriving in Bengal, and efforts were made to obtain a passage, but without success.

"At length, having been hindered from leaving Bengal, things assumed such an aspect, as exhibited little probability of being able to get away for a considerable time longer; and about the same time, my physician, in a measure, restricted me from adventuring abroad, though, undergoing meanwhile, a process of salivation, I felt comfortably well day after day, and week after week. In this situation, no longer greatly occupied with other concerns, it appeared to be a duty equally clear and important, to take up the consideration of baptism, with very great seriousness and deliberation, and to endeavor to become fully persuaded, in my own mind, both respecting the proper subjects, and the proper mode of the sacred ordinance; and the result was a conviction, that those persons only, who appear to be pious, are proper subjects; and that immersion is the only proper mode of christian baptism.

"Soon after becoming thus satisfied, in relation to this important matter, and much sooner than I could have wished to be reduced to the necessity of acting upon a conviction, then so recent, and in a situation highly delicate and responsible, an opportunity offered, of transmitting letters to the United States, and I wrote to the Rev. Secretary of the Board, Dr. Worcester, reluctantly acquainting him with my change of sentiments respecting baptism, and that it was judged expedient for me to be associated in a mission with Brother Judson, rather than with the other missionaries. By the

same conveyance, I also wrote to the Rev. Dr. Baldwin, informing him of my change of sentiment, and expressing a hope of being patronized in missionary labors, ultimately, by the Baptist churches of America.

"After returning to the Isle of France, brother Judson and myself, having determined upon attempting to effectuate a mission among the Malays, while waiting for a passage to Penang, the place judged by us most proper for the missionary station, unexpectedly, an opportunity presented, of writing to the United States, by the way of Brazil; and I united, with brother Judson, in a letter to the Rev. Dr. Worcester, and also in one to the Rev. Dr. Baldwin; but finally, after much hesitation, and as much deliberation as the shortness of the time would allow, conceived it my duty to avail myself of the same opportunity, and to revisit the United States.

"From Bahia, during the detention of a few weeks there, for want of a passage, I wrote again to the Rev. Dr. Worcester, but expecting to arrive in the United States early enough to appear before the venerable Board of Commissioners, at their annual meeting, the present month, refrained from any mention of my change of sentiments. At the same time, I wrote also to the Rev. Dr. Baldwin, stating my situation, and an apprehension that my engagements under your highly respected patronage, would be so adjusted after my arrival in

the United States, as to leave me at liberty to engage in missionary labors, under the patronage of the Baptist churches, should they be disposed to afford it.

"The object of these communications to the Rev. Dr. Baldwin, as, with very great deference to my revered patrons, I persuade myself, they will readily believe, was simply to contribute towards enlisting the Baptist churches of America, in the important cause of missions to the heathen, and to secure to myself that aid, without which, it would become impracticable for me to prosecute the design to which my life has been solemnly consecrated; taking it for granted, at the same time, that it would not be the wish of the venerated Board of Commissioners to continue to patronize a missionary, whose religious tenets could not allow him to baptise infants.

"Reduced thus, to a situation in which it is unavoidable for me to endure the very painful affliction of disappointing the pious hopes of those to whom I am under obligations of the most sacred nature, and whom to please, as well as to enjoy whose approbation, is dear to my heart, I entreat the privilege with submission, to throw myself at your feet, and to solicit a discharge from your service. And as the motives of this solicitation are conceived to be sufficiently apparent in the statement already made, I cannot suffer myself farther to trespass on your indulgence; but, with humility and consolation, resigning to your wisdom and charity, permit

me, with sentiments of exalted consideration, and with fervent supplications to the Father of mercies, for the abundant success of your exertions in the missionary cause, to subscribe myself,

Venerable and beloved,

Your missionary,

LUTHER RICE."

In referring to this topic, in letters to his brother, shortly after his return in this country, Mr. Rice makes the following observation: "To me, the subject appears so perfectly clear, that I am entirely at a loss to attempt making it, in any measure, more so. When in Calcutta, I felt it my duty to endeavor to ascertain and practise, *simply what the Saviour requïred;* I soon discovered that it was proper to baptise such as made a credible profession of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and that immersion is baptism, according to the Scriptures. In the days of the apostles, *they that believed were baptised.* This fact is expressly stated, and comports with the *explicit* command of the Saviour.

"That *immersion* is baptism, appears evident to me, because the apostle says of the believers in his time, that they were *buried* by baptism. All the the efforts to do away the obvious, common sense meaning of this passage, appear to me, to be mere quibbles. Certainly, I should think him unacquainted with language, who should speak of being *buried* by *sprinkling*. These things, with many others,

coinciding in the same view, came into my mind, and I could not, for my life, find any thing in *the Bible* of an opposite character. I dared not resist the light any longer, for I feared the Lord would not bless my labors, if I refused obedience to what was to my mind, so perfectly clear in the Bible."

At another time, he remarks: "Your affectionate and very acceptable letter of 8th January, I received in Richmond, about four weeks ago; but I have not found leisure for the grateful office of answering it, till the present hour. It gives me pleasure, to hear of your prosperity and happiness, especially to hear of any thing which indicates that your soul is in health and prospers. As to the instances of persons baptised, which you mention, I have only to remark, that, if not renewed in the spirit of their minds by the Holy Ghost, their being immersed, cannot, as you are well aware, be of any essential benefit to themselves. Permit me farther to observe, that in cases where there is good evidence of piety, and when the persons entertain what I humbly conceive to be correct and scriptural views in relation to baptism, it gives me pleasure to see them walking, or to hear of their walking in this ordinance of the Lord, conformably to what I conscientiously believe, to have been its design and primitive observance; because such (I speak of persons of unquestionable religion, and of *enlightened charity*) appear to me, without bigotry or superstition, (both of which, are too often

seen, in some degree, even in good people,) to enjoy *"the answer of a good conscience,"* upon correct and scriptural grounds.

This ordinance like that of the Holy Supper, and all the commands of Christ, contributes to their growth in grace, being found to be *according to godliness.* To yourself and to others who conscientiously differ from me in opinion, on this point, I still say, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." There is one text however, which, if agreeable to you, I desire your thoughts upon in your next, it is this, "For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ, *have put on Christ."* Gal. iii. 27.

CHAPTER VII.

LETTERS WRITTEN TO BAPTISTS OF AMERICA—OPPOSITION OF ENGLISH AUTHORITIES—ORDERED TO LEAVE INDIA—PERPLEXING TRIALS—SAILS FOR ISLE OF FRANCE—CONTINUED SICKNESS—DETERMINATION TO RETURN TO AMERICA—REASONS—SEPARATION FROM HIS ASSOCIATES—DEPARTURE FOR UNITED STATES—ARRIVAL AT ST. SALVADOR—LEFT FOR NEW YORK—DEATH OF A SAILOR—FUNERAL—RESULTS—ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK—VISIT TO BOSTON—CONFERENCE WITH BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS—VIEWS OF THEIR CONDUCT—CONSULTATION WITH BAPTISTS IN AND NEAR BOSTON—DENOMINATIONAL ACTION RECOMMENDED.

The circumstances recorded in the last chapter, were exceedingly important in relation to Mr. Rice, as they gave a new direction to his whole future history. As Mr. Judson and he, had virtually dissolved their connection with the Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, it became a question of considerable interest whether they would be sustained in their missionary labors by the American Baptist churches. This was to them entirely problematical. Letters were addressed to prominent members of the denomination in this country, making inquiry on this subject. In the meantime, however, there were other circumstances of a painful nature which attended greatly to perplex and depress their minds. One of these trials consisted in the stern opposition of the English authorities at Calcutta.

It seems that in the original charter of the East India Company, exclusive rights and privileges were conferred; there having been at that time no expectation, that dominion in the East would become very extensive. So general were the powers of this Company, that all individuals might be prohibited from a settlement in any part of their territories, without special permission from the directors at home.

In the grant thus given, it was never intended to interdict the settlement of missionaries, or to prevent the diffusion of religious knowledge among the natives. Probably the idea of erecting the standard of christianity did not even enter into the minds of those who framed that instrument. It was simply a commercial transaction. But in the monopoly of trade thus created, and the vast stores of wealth which resulted from the enterprise, there was originated a grovelling, mercenary spirit, alike disgraceful in itself, and injurious in its consequences. An apprehension was indulged among those most interested, that to introduce the gospel into India, would diminish the revenues of the Company, by exciting the superstitious Hindoo to oppose the government in defence of his religious system. Hence every obstacle was thrown in the way of missionary operations. The early efforts of Carey and his associates were greatly impeded by this circumstance. The shocking venality manifest in the endeavours of the Company to encourage and perpetuate, by

legal enactments, some of the cruel superstitions of the natives, must forever remain a foul blot on their history.

This was the influence which Mr. Rice and his coadjutors were compelled to meet on their arrival at Calcutta. They had not long been in that city, before a peremptory order was issued from the public authorities, requiring the master of the vessel to take the missionaries back to America, apprising him that a post clearance would not be allowed without a strict compliance with the mandate.

This order was revoked, with the understanding that they were to take an early passage to the Isle of France, at which point they hoped to commence operations, provided they should still be opposed in their wishes to found a mission in the British East Indies.

Some delay in obtaining a passage having occurred, and no particular manifestation of hostility being indicated, it was hoped they might yet remain in Bengal unmolested. But several ineffectual petitions to government for leave to visit Ceylon or Java, were made by Judson and Rice, and they at length found themselves under the necessity of preparing to leave for the Isle of France. About this time, they were summoned to appear before the police, and informed that they, with Messrs. Hall and Nott, would be immediately sent by the British fleet, to England. The following statement from the pen of Mr. Rice, will refer to the peculiarly

embarrassing circumstances, and the trials to which they were afterwards subjected.

"To our surprise on the 17th of November, we were all summoned to appear at the police next day. I had then been out of the hands of the physician only a few days. At the pólice we were notified that an order had been issued, alleging that by not having gone to the Isle of France, we had forfeited the farther indulgence of government, and directing the magistrate to send us to England by the fleet then under despatch, and which sailed about ten days afterwards. Passages had been already provided for brethren Hall and Nott in the Surrey—brother Judson and myself in the Prince Regent. No provision had been made, that we could learn, for sister Nott and sister Judson, and the Saturday next following the Wednesday we were notified of the order, we were to be carried down the river to be put on board the fleet. Of this circumstance, however, and of the time appointed for the sailing of the fleet, we were not apprised, when notified of the order, and a certificate taken by the officers of police of the places where we re spectively resided.

"Friday, of the same week, was regular Council day; but on that day for some reason or other, the Supreme Council did not assemble; and the Governor-general had returned to his country seat, twelve or fifteen miles from Calcutta, so that we could not avail ourselves of the privilege of petitioning.

Brethren Hall and Nott, did, indeed endeavor to obtain an audience of the Governor-general, and to lay before his lordship, a petition, at his country seat; but found it impracticable. However, as they had previously obtained all the necessary official papers, with the advice of worthy and judicious friends, early on Saturday morning they went on board the ship in which they had engaged passage, and escaped all farther difficulty with government. The ship was to land at Ceylon, probably one of them, with sister Nott, would remain there, and the other proceed to Bombay. If ever they had been sent to England, sister Nott, would have remained in Bengal, and it was their intention to have left most of their baggage behind, and to have returned to India as soon as practicable.

"Brother Judson and myself engaged a passage for the Isle of France the next day after being notified of the order of government; the master of police, Judge Martin, having promised Dr. Marshman, that he would grant us a pass, if we would actually engage a passage; and indeed, said that this was the best thing we could do. The next day after, he refused to grant the pass; but again promised to the master of the ship, with whom we had contracted for our passage, that he would grant it; but yet refused again, the next day following. Being engaged on Saturday, in preparing for our voyage, and in getting our baggage on board the Creole, the ship in which we had engaged our passage to

the Isle of France, we were, of course, most of the day, absent from the place of our usual residence, and escaped the officers, who were sent to put us on board a small craft, destined to take us down the river to the fleet. The officers, went indeed to the house, while sister Judson, and a part of brother Judson's baggage were still there; but they were gone when he returned for the remainder of his baggage.

"Having engaged our passage on the faith of promises made by Judge Martin, that he would grant us the necessary pass, and having already got our baggage, we finally went on board ourselves, without a pass; and the next day after, Sabbath, the ship began to drop down the river. On Monday night, the ship was arrested on our account, and detained a day or two. I went up to Calcutta twice, to effect, if practicable, our getting, if not on the Creole, on some other vessel, as the case might be, but could not succeed; and we were reduced to the necessity of quitting the Creole, and of remaining a few days at Fullah, about forty miles down the river from Calcutta, in total uncertainty, and in a state of anxiety, better conceived than described.

"At length, the necessary pass was sent to us, and on Monday, 30th November, we re-embarked on the Creole, at Saugur, and the next morning, put out to sea. By what considerations Judge Martin was finally prevailed on to grant us a pass,

after having before, so often promised and refused it, I am not able to say. And why we were not actually put on board the Prince Regent, if government really wished to send us to England, is equally unaccountable. The government, indeed, appears to be capricious in regard to such matters. And it is strongly suspected, that the order itself, resulted from the unfriendly representations of Judge Martin; a letter written by him to government, was mentioned in the order, as one of the reasons of its being issued. We arrived at the Isle of France, the 16th of January, 1813. There, we met with brother Newell, borne down under a most oppressive weight of affliction."

Thus far, the designs of Mr. Rice had been frustrated. He had fondly hoped to enter, with but little delay, upon the work of teaching benighted heathen, that gospel, which brings life and immortality to light. But his way had been hedged up, and even at the time of his arrival at the Isle of France, there was but little probability that these impediments would be removed.

In addition to these trials, Mr. Rice was required by his heavenly Father, to suffer much, in the experience of painful sickness. His health began to fail during the voyage from America. When he arrived at Calcutta, it was the most unhealthy season of the year, and his strength being much reduced, he was soon prostrated, with what was discovered by the physicians, to be an affection of the liver.

During his stay in Bengal, he continued to suffer, with some intermission, in a distressing measure; and at several periods, it was thought his constitution would not recover the shock it had received.

"I cannot," he says, in a letter to his parents, "be insensible that my situation is exceedingly precarious, and that some of the symptoms of my disease, are of an alarming character. The day before yesterday, appearances took rapidly an unfavorable turn, and for a while, I felt it to be extremely questionable whether my life would be continued twenty-four hours. I am now better; but whatever may be the issue, I wish to say continually, and to feel it, 'the Lord do with me, what seemeth him good.'"

It has been already stated, that letters were directed to prominent members of the Baptist denomination, in this country, in regard to the probability of systematic efforts among their churches, to sustain the cause of missions. Upon the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Judson, with Mr. Rice, at the Isle of France, after much free and prayerful conference on the subject, it was thought advisable, that Mr. Rice should return to this country. Among other reasons, he stated the following, as having influenced him to this course.

"1st. To communicate information to the Board of Commissioners, and to have my interesting connection with that body, adjusted in a regular and proper manner.

"2d. To contribute towards engaging the Baptist churches of America, in the missionary cause, and to obtain for ourselves, if practicable, their patronage, in case the Board should, on account of our change of sentiment, in relation to baptism, release us from their service.

"3d. Being at the Isle of France, which reckoning from Penang, is about one-third of the distance towards the United States, the passage that offered being a cheap one, and by taking with me Malay books, any considerable loss of time in acquiring that language, might be prevented.

"4th. To reconnoitre South America as a missionary field.

"5th. The probability that a voyage to the United States would contribute to a more perfect restoration of my health, especially, to a more complete removal of an affection of the liver, which assailed me in India."

On the 15th of March, 1813, he bid farewell to his beloved associates, and as events have proved, to meet them no more on earth. He embarked in the Donna Maria, for St. Salvador. On the 25th of the same month, he makes the following entry in his journal. "This day, I am thirty years old. I renewedly give myself to the Lord; renewedly devote myself to the cause of missions, and beg of God to accept me as his, and particularly as devoted to the missionary service. O Lord, accept, I beseech thee, these consecrations of myself to thee,

and to the missionary cause; and allow me, if it may be thy will, a few years to labor in the missionary field, and then receive me to heaven, for Christ's sake. Amen."

The voyage was pleasant, and on the 4th of May, they arrived at the city of St. Salvador, where he remained more than two months. The following reference to his stay at that place, in a letter to Mr. Judson, will be read with interest. "I had not separated from you two days, perhaps, not a single day, before I earnestly wished myself back again at Port St. Louis. Had it been possible to have left the vessel, and conveyed myself to the Isle of France. I certainly should have done it, and should not, probably, soon again, thought of returning to America.

"Nothing of special interest occurred during the voyage. We had very pleasant weather in the neighborhood of the Cape of Good Hope, and were near the coast, probably, not more than six or eight miles from it, a little to the eastward of the Cape. I don't recollect whether any on board, except the mate, who was the real commander, could speak English. He was a friendly kind of man, and read a great deal in the Bible, especially on the Sabbath. For myself, I was occupied the whole passage, in writing a series of letters to my only surviving brother, on the subject of baptism.

"At St. Salvador, to which place you may recollect, the vessel in which I left the Isle of France,

was destined, I found about half a dozen Americans, from New York and Boston, besides sailors and prisoners, who, in the operations of the war, had been captured and sent there. The Americans here, of course, were disposed to treat me in a friendly and gentlemanly manner. I remained a few days on board the vessel, in the harbor, and the balance of the time, say about six weeks, at the house of Henry Hill, Esq. American consul.

"Not a religious person could I find in the place. Mrs. Hill descended from religious parents, was anxious to have her children baptised, or rather, sprinkled; and without consulting me on the subject, and not having been informed of my being a Baptist, Mr. and Mrs. Hill had made arrangements for the ceremony to be performed by me; and had, if I rightly recollect, invited some of their friends to be present on a Sabbath, for the purpose of witnessing the same.

"When they mentioned the matter to me, I gave them to understand, that although desirous to do them a pleasure, my views on the subject were such, as rendered it impossible for me to comply with their wishes; that I apprehended, however, that no disadvantage to their children would arise, in consequence of not having the ordinance administered to them, and that even if my own views had not experienced a change on the subject after leaving the United States, the instructions under which I went out, would not have authorized me

to baptise the children, inasmuch as the parents were neither of them professors of religion. The consul, although he treated me in a very friendly manner, did not ask me to preach nor to pray at his house, nor even to ask a blessing at his table. I have heard, that both himself and lady, have since become religious.

"The climate of St. Salvador, although down as low as thirteen degrees of latitude, is good, and the place healthy, and the country round about, I believe, good, fertile, and pleasant, but occupied by a most miserable population. The Catholic superstitions, which by-the-bye, is, I think, about as bad a state of heathenism as any, was entirely predominant. I adopted the opinion, however, that a missionary of righteousness, might do some good in that country; and I do hope the day is not remote, when missionaries shall be sent to South America.

"The vessel in which I proceeded from the Isle of France to St. Salvador, after a few weeks, set sail for Salem; but I was not permitted to join her. She had a quantity of saltpetre on board, which was a contraband article, and the proprietor conceived it not safe for a person to be taken as a passenger, who would not, as he supposed, swear for the truth, in case the vessel should be overhauled, in order to save the cargo. I wrote by that opportunity, to Dr. Worcester, giving various information, without saying any thing of my change of

sentiment respecting baptism; but remarked, in conclusion, that I abstained from several things, which I should have felt it my duty to state, but, that I anticipated being in Boston time enough to be present at the annual meeting of the Board in September.

"At the time of writing that letter, I knew not whether information of my change of sentiment had arrived or not, and in case it had not, I thought it best to avoid communicating it till my arrival; not knowing what course the Board of Commissioners might take upon them to pursue, in relation to me, and choosing to be on the ground, without giving them the advantage that might arise from the information, beforehand; provided, that information had not already reached them. I afterwards understood, that Dr. Worcester had shown the letter to some of his friends, under an impression that it went to prove that I had not become a Baptist. There was nothing, however, in the letter, from which, by any means, fairly to make out such an inference.

Ever most affectionately yours,

LUTHER RICE."

Having obtained passage in a cartel from St. Salvador, he sailed from that place to New York, July 17th, 1813. Every Sabbath, public religious services were allowed on deck. This furnished the opportunity of addressing a large congregation, as in addition to several cabin passengers, about one hundred prisoners of war were on board. Some

time after his arrival in this country, he thus refers to an interesting incident which occurred during the voyage.

"About a fortnight after leaving the harbor, one of the sailors died, the only human being, as far as I can remember, that I have ever seen expire; unless I should reckon two that were shot at Fort Independence. When he was committed to his watery grave, I made an exhortation to the people; one of the sailors as thoughtless, vile, and profane as the rest, was awakened by that exhortation—and although he did not make known to me the state of his mind during the remainder of the voyage, yet not long after arriving in this country, he became a member of a Baptist church in Philadelphia, and has since become a preacher; he is a zealous, consistent, and useful man. He always manifests the greatest attachment and respect, whenever I have the pleasure of meeting with him. Perhaps I may without impropriety here record with the deepest gratitude, that a few, perhaps a dozen or twenty in various parts of the country, have been awakened by my instrumentality, and brought to a knowledge of the truth. In all the cases I have known, their experience has been clear and satisfactory."

The individual above referred to, was elder Thompson, who though advanced in years is still a laborious minister of the gospel. In alluding to the circumstances which led to his conversion, he represents himself as having been one of the most

daring transgressors. On the morning when the funeral of his shipmate was to take place, he indulged in unusual gaiety and profanity. Just before the body was committed to the ocean, he proposed in a jesting way to some of the other seamen, to go and hear what the preacher would say concerning their comrade. With his own peculiar manner, Mr. Rice pointed to the corpse, then to the watery grave before him, and to the open sky, and admonished all to prepare to meet God in judgment. The scene itself was solemn, but it was rendered more so by the thrilling tones of warning and exhortation, which fell from the preacher's lips. Mr. Thompson was almost overpowered by the intensity of anguish which seized his spirit. He felt that there was a God, and oppressed by a sense of his own guilt, he began to cry for mercy, nor did he cease to seek the Lord, until he understood and rejoiced in the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ.

During the voyage, another of the seamen was brought to a knowledge of the truth through the instrumentality of Mr. Rice, and afterwards united with a Baptist church in this country, giving evidence of a thorough change to the time of his death. Thus the Lord honored his servant with the high privilege of winning souls to himself, at this early period of his ministry.

On the 7th of September, he arrived in New York. In that city he remained but four days, being solicitous to meet the American Board of

Commissioners at their annual session, which took place on the 15th of that month. An allusion to that meeting is found in a letter subsequently written to Mr. Judson.

"DEAR BROTHER:—I reached Boston late on the evening of Tuesday. The next day commenced the annual meeting of the Board of Commissioners in Boston. I saw Mr. Evarts in the morning, and let him know at what place I might be found at any hour the Board might think proper to admit me to an audience. This they did in the afternoon of the same day. I made a general statement of what had occurred from the time of our leaving America, up to the time then present, which occupied, I suppose about an hour and a half. I put into the hands of the corresponding secretary, Dr. Worcester, a paper which I had prepared on the particular subject of my change of sentiments in relation to baptism. A duplicate of that paper is I believe still in my possession.

In that communication, I presented myself before them, recognizing the existence of the relation between us which had been produced by ordaining and instructing me as their missionary. In doing it, I requested to be discharged from their service. Of that communication however, they never deigned to take any notice. I waited perhaps till Friday, and wishing to go down to Salem, I saw Dr. Dwight, and asked him if the Board had granted my request, to which he replied that a vote had been

passed to that effect. I intimated to him that it was my wish to go to Salem, and asked if the Board would wish to see me again, to which he signified in reply that there would be nothing improper in my proceeding to Salem, without any further regard to the Board.

"I had determined not to have any thing to do with the Baptists; nor to enter into any arrangements implying a dereliction of my connection with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, till my relation with that body was adjusted, or rather regularly dissolved. On Monday following, at the meeting in Boston, I think it was, I obtained by applying to the recording secretary of the Board, knowledge of the fact, that they had voted that they considered the relation between me and the Board dissolved from the date of my letter from Calcutta, announcing the fact of my change of sentiments. I then found myself at liberty to pursue the course which might be proper.

Ever most affectionately yours,

LUTHER RICE."

The manner in which the communication was received and treated by the Board, could not fail to produce dissatisfaction, both with Mr. Rice and the Baptists, with whom he had now become virtually connected. It was naturally expected that an official reply, couched in respectful language, would have been received, especially as the letter of resignation was written in a style becoming the

peculiar relations which were sustained to them by their missionaries. That such a reply was suitable, cannot be doubted by any candid and impartial mind; it would, even among worldly men, under similar circumstances, have been deemed proper. How their conduct was viewed by Mr. Rice, while he accorded to them the character of pious men, will be seen by a letter written on this subject, to a particular friend.

"I did not suppose that the mere fact of the change of my sentiments, in itself, dissolved the connection between myself and that body; and certainly thought, that their own *liberal professions* might fairly give a different aspect to the case. I therefore made a respectful communication to them on the subject, and requested to be discharged from their farther service. To this, they deigned not to make any reply; nor did they even communicate to me the resolution above mentioned. I learned the fact of it, by inquiring what they did touching the matter in question. I was well enough satisfied, though it seemed to me, they might have pursued a course more happily conformed to their professed liberality of sentiment, in relation to sects, and more nearly conformed to the christian spirit also. They did, indeed, instruct their treasurer to write to me to refund the money expended in my outfit, passage to India, &c. He mentioned the thing to me *viva voce*, to which I replied, that if he would write to

me on the subject, I would certainly attend to his communication.

"I rather wished for a fair and fit opportunity to remind them of their *non sectarian professions;* of the fact, that so handsome a portion had been drawn from the *Baptists;* of the light in which I had viewed the relations between myself and their body, consistently too, with their own professions; and of the fact, that my own outfit in particular, had been provided for *specially*, and very much by my own personal exertions. But I never heard any thing farther from their treasurer on the subject. They are an excellent body of people, and are doing much good. I hope their remaining errors, particularly that concerning baptism, will, at no very distant day, be removed. Christians must all be united, before the millenial state can take place. To be united, they must possess much more holiness and divine love, and conformity to the image of the Son of God, than they do at present. For this blessed result, let us devoutly, earnestly, and constantly labor, strive and pray."

Having discharged what was deemed to be his obligations to the American Board of Commissioners, Mr. Rice now felt himself at liberty to make formal and direct endeavors to promote the missionary enterprise among his Baptist brethren. Accordingly, several of the towns contiguous to Boston were visited, for the purpose of conferring with such benevolent individuals as might be supposed

to take an interest in this subject. There were then in existence, four or five Baptist Foreign Mission Societies in New England. The oldest was located in Salem, it having been organized shortly after the sailing of the missionaries from this country. Beside this, may be mentioned, the societies formed in Boston, Providence, and Haverhill. In the month of September, a few days after the decision of the Board of Commissioners, a conference of discreet brethren in Boston, was held, to consult on the course proper to be pursued in the exigencies of the case.

It was thought necessary to proceed at once to the adoption of measures, which might excite the Baptists of this country, to combine their energies in the mission cause. They concluded to issue a circular, which should be sent to prominent individuals in different parts of the United States. This circular proposed a general co-operation of the churches. At first, it was thought advisable to make the Boston Society, which had been formed in consequence of Mr. Judson's change of sentiment, and which had already assumed the responsibility of his support, the parent institution. But at the suggestion of Mr. Rice, they concluded, as soon as practicable, to call a meeting of delegates from different parts of the country, at which time, some organization might be formed to conduct these operations on a more enlarged scale.

CHAPTER VIII.

NECESSITY OF CONSULTING THE CHURCHES—MR. RICE CONSENTS TO ENGAGE IN THE AGENCY—LEAVES BOSTON—VISITS NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA—PROCEEDS TO THE SOUTH—SUCCESS—PROJECT OF A CONVENTION—LETTERS FROM PROMINENT INDIVIDUALS—MISSIONARY MEETING IN PHILADELPHIA—BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION ORGANIZED—MR. RICE URGED TO REMAIN IN THIS COUNTRY—APPOINTED GENERAL AGENT—INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR S.—ZEAL AND SUCCESS IN AGENCY—LETTERS—MULTIPLIED PRIVATIONS AND LABORS—LETTERS—FIRST TRIENNIAL MEETING OF CONVENTION—LATTER DAY LUMINARY COMMENCED—LETTER.

For the purpose of carrying out the plan alluded to in the last chapter, with the advice and concurrence of his brethren in Boston, Mr. Rice determined to visit the southern states. Thus commenced a series of laborious effort in rousing the denomination to systematic action in the various benevolent movements of the present day. God intended to honor him as a pioneer in this work. Nor was this an enterprise of inconsiderable character. In almost every section of our land, the Baptists had been dignified as the instruments of salvation to the souls of men. Their ministers, though in many

instances, deficient in scholastic attainments, were, as a class, men of good sense, prudence, and piety. With an unquenchable ardor, and armed with the sword of the spirit, they went forth to the conflict against the powers of darkness. Nor were these endeavors vain. Through God, they were mighty in pulling down strongholds, and in building up the kingdom of their heavenly master. With their numbers, influence, and wealth, they were qualified to exercise a wide and commanding influence in the general cause of truth and righteousness. Their brethren in Great Britain, had been foremost in modern missionary efforts, and it had been ascertained, that in this country, they were always ready to promote those good objects, which had been properly brought before their notice. Any means, therefore, which were likely to enlist the energies of the denomination, could not but be regarded by all the lovers of truth, as vastly important.

It is known also, that unlike the other leading denominations of our country, the Baptists have no large ecclesiastical judicatories, bringing together from different parts, the representatives of the churches. Believing as they do, in the scriptural propriety of the independent form of church government, and allowing no jurisdiction to any higher tribunal than the church, their concentrated energy had not been brought to bear on the interests of the heathen world. It was important to adopt some plan, which might combine the voluntary action of

the churches, and decide upon some common reservoir, into which, as from so many streams, the churches might allow their contributions to flow. To effect this, the churches throughout the land were to be consulted, and in consulting them generally, and successfully, there were required no small measure of industry, patience, and judgment. These qualifications were possessed by Mr. Rice, who was now about to enter upon this important agency.

He left Boston on the 29th of September, 1813, on his first southern tour. That he might once more visit his aged parents, he passed through Northborough. Referring to this, he remarks in his journal: "Glad to see my parents once more, and to find them in comfortable health. My brother, anxious to know the grounds of my becoming a Baptist, is I hope, satisfied; after some conversation on the subject, that I am able to render a reason in this matter."

Having remained a short time in his native place, he proceeded to New York, and to his high satisfaction, found the Baptists ready to co-operate in the mission cause. In Philadelphia, he was received with the most cordial kindness. During his former brief stay in that city, preparatory to the voyage to India, he had become acquainted with many of the Baptists, and they were prepared on this account, to give him a welcome reception. The time of his arrival was favorable to the object of his visit, as on the same day, the Philadelphia

Association commenced its annual meeting. They allowed him the first favorable opportunity, of presenting detailed statements respecting the results which had followed the efforts of the English Baptist mission, in India, and the inviting fields of missionary labor, which the providence of God was opening before our churches in America. A committee of eleven was appointed, to consider the subject, who reported a constitution for the Philadelphia Baptist Missionary Society, which was subsequently formed.

From Philadelphia, he proceeded to Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond, and thence on to the Charleston Association. At all these places, he met with encouraging success. With scarcely a single exception, the ministers with whom he became acquainted, were desirous of a denominational movement in favor of missions. At the Charleston Association, the subject having been introduced by Dr. Furman, it received their cordial sanction, and measures were adopted to bring it before the attention of the churches of that region. Charleston, Savannah, and most of the prominent towns of South Carolina and Georgia, having been visited by Mr. Rice, he concluded to return by another route, to be in Philadelphia about the first of May, 1814.

During this tour, as far as practicable, churches and individuals were consulted, on the expediency of a general meeting of the friends of missions, at

some central and convenient place. In addition to personal conversation, letters were written by Mr. Rice, to numerous persons in the United States, while on his tour, so that no time was allowed to remain unoccupied, and no means left untried, to accomplish the object he so ardently desired. In writing to Mr. Judson, he thus describes some of the particulars of this journey:

"While passing from Richmond to Petersburg in the stage, an enlarged view of the business opened upon my contemplations. The plan which suggested itself to my mind, that of forming one principal society in each state, bearing the name of the state, and others in the same state, auxiliary to that; and by these large, or state societies, delegates be appointed, to form one general society. The society in Richmond, in the outset, took the name of the state, as did one afterwards, in North Carolina; but in no case, have auxiliaries been formed to these state societies. Recently, however, this same kind of system, in substance and effect, but differing in form and modification, begins to come into action. Several state conventions have been formed already, and more will probably be originated. To these, it is calculated, auxiliaries will be formed, and that associations will also become constituents; and that from these delegates, perhaps, ultimately, *the* delegates will be appointed to the general convention.

It may not be improper to introduce in this place, one or two letters, written in reply to inquiries made by him, respecting the practicability of a general meeting. They will furnish a correct idea of the nature of his labors about this period, and of the estimation in which they were held by most of his brethren. The first is from the present senior secretary of the Board, whose interest, from that time to the present, in the mission cause, has known no abatement. It is dated

SALEM, *December* 7, 1813.

"REV. AND DEAR BROTHER:—I will not attempt to disguise the satisfaction I felt on reading your letter from Charleston. Every circumstance that looks favorable to the cause of Christ among the heathen, is interesting to my heart. Our denomination have long wanted some general excitement towards this great and important object, that the means within their power might be called into action. I think your visit promises to be highly useful in this respect; besides, it will give you an opportunity of witnessing the spirit they are of, and enable you to carry with you, whenever you go to the field of your labors, a more correct impression of the sentiments of our brethren in relation to the mission, than you otherwise could have done.

"The societies that have been formed this way, continue to exert themselves, and receive some encouragement, more than they anticipated, or

from unexpected sources; and I believe they will readily adopt the plan of a 'general committee,' to meet in Philadelphia. The object of this committee, I presume, will be to adopt some system for general operation, after they have come together; for as yet, we are this way, as much undecided upon that subject, as we have been. For myself, I think Philadelphia must become the central point, and the residence of most of the *executive members* of the general society. We must have in some one place, a few men, to whom the immediate management of the whole concern may be entrusted. Brethren widely separated, cannot act with that concert, promptness, and decision, which a concern of this nature and importance demands. Will each of the societies formed at the south, send *one* or *more*, to the contemplated meeting in Philadelphia? I think the time you have proposed for that meeting will be as favorable as any one that could have been named.

"We wish to see you again this way; though while we believe you to be employed for the good *cause*, we will patiently wait. The anniversary sermon to our mission society, which I proposed for you to preach, will, in consequence of your absence, be delivered by Mr. Sharp, on the first Wednesday of January.

"Do you hear any thing from Kentucky, and the western states? There are many Baptists in those

parts. Take some measures, if you can, to excite them to co-operation.

"Wishing you much of the presence and blessing of the great Head of the church, I subscribe myself, your friend and brother, in the precious Saviour.

L. BOLLES."

The second letter is from the lamented Staughton, who, for several years, filled the office of corresponding secretary of the Board. He writes as follows:

PHILADELPHIA, *December* 17, 1813.

"MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have received, and thank you for your communication of the 6th inst. I rejoice that the Lord has so greatly succeeded your exertions, and I hope the example of existing societies, will procure the origination of many more. The leaven is in the meal, and its operation is inevitable.

"On this sheet you will learn how far we have progressed in our own society. Circulars like the above are now distributing, and I hope by April next, we shall come out a pretty large body. The meeting in April is for organizing the establishment. Our annual meeting is the first Wednesday in June. With respect to the place of meeting of the General Committee, I think our society ought to be passive. I was conversing last evening with Dr. Rogers on the subject, who is of opinion with myself, that the Societies which exist at the greatest distance from some central point should decide for themselves. I

am persuaded that our Society will acquiesce with cheerfulness in such a decision. Were we to consult personal convenience and gratification, we should at once recommend Philadelphia.

"What if you were to drop a line to brother Baldwin on the subject; he is president of the American Society. The meeting contemplated wheresoever held, will be attended with considerable expense, and that expense will be in effect a proportionate abstraction from the funds of the mission; to have the point of convening as central as possible, is therefore obviously desirable.

"I had no doubt of your finding an affectionate hospitable reception among our southern brethren. I trust your company and labors may kindle a flame of zeal for the Lord of Hosts that shall never go out or subside. You did not mention the state of your health, I hope you find it improved and that a southern winter will prepare you for a northern summer. Wishing you much of the presence of our best friend, and that your usefulness in the churches, of Christ, and in the salvation of the heathen, may be permanent and growing,

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

WM. STAUGHTON.

About this period, the Philadelphia Society, formed through Mr. Rice's agency, interested itself in preparing the way for the general meeting proposed to be held, by sending a circular to prominent individuals and churches, inviting their attendance

and co-operation. In this circular they use the following language. "On the conviction wrought upon the minds of our brethren Judson and Rice, in India, respecting christian baptism, and their cheerful submission thereto, you have already been apprised. This change of sentiment in those men of God, must convince us of the necessity of imitating the laudable examples already set us by others of the American Baptists, in giving every encouragement and assistance towards the furtherance of such benevolent designs, as are connected with the bringing into the fold of Jesus, the far separated, and distant members of the same redeemed family.

"We cannot doubt, beloved brethren, your cordial disposition to act with us, and therefore solicit your company, as far as is possible, on the first Wednesday in April next, at 3 o'clock, P. M. that we may be enabled to give vitality to that union of exertion, which past experience teaches us will not be in vain. Duty is ours, the event is God's. Let us begin, and persist, and we shall prevail. Pray ye for the peace, and increase of the church; they *shall* prosper that love her. Ye that mention the name of the Lord, keep not silence yourselves, nor let Him rest in silence until he establish, and until he render "Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth."

The meeting having been appointed by general consent to be held in Philadelphia, on the 18th of May, 1814, at that time a number of ministers and delegates from different parts of the United States

assembled. Dr. Richard Furman was called to the chair, and Dr. Thomas Baldwin appointed secretary. After a careful consideration of the whole subject for several days, it was unanimously decided to form the "General Convention of the Baptist denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions." Through this association all the foreign missionary operations of the American Baptists have been conducted. Most of those revered men, who were present on that interesting occasion, now sleep in Jesus, and are mingling in the joys of the upper world, but the results of their labor have been extensively felt in the dissemination of the gospel among the heathen. Many a pagan has abandoned his idols and yielded to the peaceful reign of the Prince of Peace. Nor will these exertions be remitted, until his triumph shall be complete and the whole earth be full of his glory. Writing to Mr. Judson about this period, he adverts to the incipient measures which had been adopted among his brethren in this country, and his own desire to return to India.

ROCKINGHAM, VERMONT, *September 30th*, 1814.

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter of the 25th of August, 1813, from Rangoon, I had the peculiar satisfaction to receive a few days since; and have also seen sister Judson's letter to her parents and sisters. These I have read with the deepest interest—I rejoice much in the good

hand of our God upon you in opening your way to Rangoon; but feel greatly pained to find myself still at so great a distance from the dearest friends I have on earth. Several times have I written since my arrival in this country. By the last opportunity, a copy of the 'Proceedings of the Baptist Convention for missionary purposes,' was forwarded, which when it comes to hand, will inform you what is going forward in this country, among our baptized brethren. This convention, as you will perceive, is composed of delegates from the Mission Societies formed throughout all the United States.

"The Baptist Board for Foreign Missions, instituted by the Convention, readily undertook your support and mine, but thought it necessary for me to continue my labors in this country, for a time. Of this I am convinced in my judgment, though it is extremely painful to my heart to be thus detained here. I hope however in the course of five or six months to get the Baptists so well rallied, that the necessity of my remaining will no longer exist. And I certainly wish not to remain here a moment longer than my stay will more advance the mission, than my departure for the field again. I have addressed a printed letter to the Baptist Associations generally, and I am happy to learn that the subject is taken up by them with readiness. I entertain the hope that such arrangements may be made as to enable the Board to send its annual reports to all the churches of our order throughout the country, and

that many of the churches will come into the measure of annual contributions for the missions.

"So constantly have the concerns of the mission occupied my attention, that I have seen my parents but once since my arrival in the United States, and that only one day, a year ago. Plymouth, I have not been able to visit till quite recently; the Sabbath before last, I had the happiness of passing there. In your father's house, I felt as if among my own relations, and regretted much that it was not in my power to remain longer with friends, so particularly dear to me; your parents and sisters were in usual health. Your father inquired respecting my change of sentiment and present views, but made not a single remark tending to the support of infant baptism.

"Several promising young men of the right sort for missionaries, with whom I have become acquainted, will I believe engage in this great service. I long for the time to arrive, that I may once more associate with my dear, very dear brother and sister Judson; till which happy, and much to be prayed for day, permit me to assure you of my continual, and most affectionate regard,

My dear brother and sister Judson,

LUTHER RICE."

In the commencement of denominational action among the Baptists, the subject of this memoir beheld the accomplishment of a work dear to his heart. For this, he had toiled and prayed. On his south-

ern tour, preparatory to the meeting in May, he had collected nearly $1,300 for the mission; arrangements also were made by him, in various places, for future and efficient aid. About twenty missionary societies had been formed in different parts of the United States, and he now saw the system which was likely to effect such vast results, in complete operation.

During the important meeting to which allusion has just been made, Mr. Rice, in connection with a report of his labors in his southern tour, made some valuable suggestions, which, doubtless, contributed to assist the Board in their future decisions. They furnish evidence of the deep interest he felt in this subject, and the wide scope he had allowed his thoughts to take.

While the Baptist churches in this country were thus led to the adoption of systematic measures, to promote the spread of the gospel in heathen lands, the hand of Providence was opening to their view, a most inviting field of labor. By a mysterious, and apparently adverse combination of circumstances, Mr. and Mrs. Judson were driven to Rangoon. They were actually compelled to leave the region in which they had fondly hoped to live, as heralds of the cross, to labor for the salvation of heathen tribes. But an all wise Jehovah, designed these events, as preparatory to results, which were to gladden another, and equally wretched portion of the pagan world. These results are written in

the history of the Burman mission. Reference to this interesting subject, is found in the reflections which follow from the pen of Mr. Rice. "Soon after my parting with brother and sister Judson, they went from the Isle of France to Madras, intending to proceed from that place to Penang, or to some point where they might labor for the salvation of the Malays; but an order soon issued from government, to send them to England, to get them out of the country. Just at that crisis, a small vessel was about to sail from Madras for Rangoon, in Burmah; and as the only alternative to escape, being absolutely driven away from the field of their contemplated exertions, and of their hopes, they took passage, and were thus conveyed to a very important position in the Burman empire. Finding it practicable to stay there, they had no wish to leave the place, and their purpose was at once fixed, to begin on that very spot their great undertaking, to give *the glorious gospel of the blessed God* to the eighteen millions of that dark empire, and to the many millions of the contiguous region! *Thus, by a manifestly special and very signal interposition of Divine Providence, were they,* without themselves *intending it, conveyed to that very important missionary field; and thus, most providentially, was the Burman mission commenced. And by many signal interpositions of the same Divine Providence, has it been brought to its present condition of un-*

usual prosperity, and unparalleled promise. GLORY BE TO GOD!"

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Judson to Mr. Rice, will furnish some idea of the feelings of himself and his wife, as they were conducted by their heavenly Father, to the scene of their future labors.

"A mission to Rangoon we had been accustomed to regard with horror. But it was now brought to a point; we must either venture there, or be sent to Europe. All other paths were shut up, and thus situated, though dissuaded by all our friends at Madras, we commended ourselves to the care of God, and embarked the 22d of June. It was a crazy old vessel.

"The captain was the only person on board that could speak our language, and we had no other apartment than what was made by canvass. Our passage was very tedious. Mrs. Judson was taken dangerously ill, and continued so, until, at one period, I came to experience the awful sensation which necessarily resulted from the expectation of an immediate separation from my beloved wife, the only remaining companion of my wanderings. About the same time, the captain being unable to make the Carnicobar island, where it was intended to take in a cargo of cocoa-nuts, we were driven into a dangerous strait, between the little and great Andamans, two savage coasts, where the captain had never been before, and where, if we had been

cast ashore, we should (according to all accounts) have been killed and eaten by the natives. But as one evil is sometimes an antidote to another, so it happened with us. Our being driven into this dangerous, but quiet channel, brought immediate relief to the agitated and exhausted frame of Mrs. Judson, and conduced essentially to her recovery. And in the event, we were safely conducted over the black rocks, which we sometimes saw in the gulf below, and on the eastern side of the islands found favorable winds, which gently wafted us forward to Rangoon. But on arriving here, other trials awaited us.

"We had never before seen a place where European influence had not contributed to smooth and soften the rough features of uncultivated nature. The prospect of Rangoon, as we approached, was quite disheartening. I went on shore, just at night, to take a view of the place, and the Mission-house, but so dark, and cheerless, and unpromising did all things appear, that the evening of that day, after my return to the ship, we have marked as the most gloomy and distressing that we ever passed. Instead of rejoicing, as we ought to have done, in having found a heathen land, from which we were not immediately driven away, such were our weaknesses, that we felt we had no portion left here below, and found consolation only in looking beyond our pilgrimage, which we tried to flatter ourselves would be short, to that peaceful region where

the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. But if ever we commended ourselves, sincerely and without reserve, to the disposal of our heavenly Father, it was on this evening. And after some recollection and prayer, we experienced something of the presence of Him who cleaveth closer than a brother; something of that peace which our Saviour bequeathed to his followers—a legacy which we know from this experience, endures when the fleeting pleasures and unsubstantial riches of the world are passed away.

"The next day Mrs. Judson was carried into the town, being unable to walk, and we found a home at the Mission-house, though Mr. Carey was absent at Ava. We soon began to find that it was in our hearts to live and die with the Burmans. We gradually became reconciled to the place; and from a conviction of the superior importance of this to any unoccupied station, and a hope that, notwithstanding the frightful accounts we had received, we should find it practicable to remain, we were induced to pitch our tent. We applied very soon to the study of the language; and in this we have been closely engaged to the present time, a period of about two years, so far as Mrs. Judson's health, and my numerous interruptions have permitted."

Having succeeded in his desire to effect a denominational organization, Mr. Rice became solicitous respecting the course he should pursue: Whether to return immediately to India, or to remain still longer

in this country. In consulting his brethren, it was unanimously thought, that he should continue to prosecute the agency among the American churches. It was believed, that his personal labors were essential to mature the plans which had been formed, as no man could be found so well qualified to represent and advocate the interests of the mission. The following are among the first of the official acts of the Board:

"1. Certain communications were made to the Board by the Rev. Mr. Rice, containing remarks on fields for missionary labor; together with a statement of the moneys he had received and expended on his journey to the southern states: on which *Resolved*, That the Board possess a high sense of the zealous, disinterested, and faithful services of their beloved brother, and feel a lively emotion of gratitude to the Lord, for the success with which his labors have been crowned. Ordered, that the communication be published.

"2. *Resolved*, That Mr. Rice be appointed, under the patronage of this Board, as their missionary, to continue his itinerant services in these United States for a reasonable time; with a view to excite the public mind more generally, to engage in missionary exertions, and to assist in originating societies or institutions, for carrying the missionary design into execution."

In accordance with the earnest wishes of the Board, Mr. Rice continued his agency, and employ-

ed the whole of the following year in the northern and eastern states, visiting churches and associations; carrying on at the same time, an extensive correspondence with prominent individuals in different parts of the United States. Of such importance did the Board consider these labors, that in the spring of the next year, at a regular meeting, the following entry was made in their minutes:

"However desirable it might be for brother Rice to return immediately to India, pursuant to his own wishes, to be associated with brother Judson, and the wishes of the Board to avail themselves of his services in the Burman mission, yet such is the actual posture of the missionary business in this country, and the course clearly indicated by an over-ruling and all wise Providence, as in the judgment of the Board, imperiously to require his longer detention, and farther labors here; therefore,

"*Voted*, That brother Rice for some time longer, continue as an agent of this Board; subject however, to such openings in Providence, and such success attendant on his labor, as in the judgment of the Board, may render his continuance in this country no longer requisite, and his removal to a missionary station requisite and proper."

During his agency in New England, Mr. Rice found frequent opportunities of conferring with his pedobaptist friends in relation to the change which had taken place in his sentiments. In these interviews, he did not fail to maintain with becoming

earnestness the position he occupied. Believers' immersion, was in his estimation of great practical importance, he could not therefore be prevented from defending and urging it among those with whom he was formerly connected. But in all his endeavors to influence others in this duty, his manner was kind and conciliatory. Knowing by experience the power of early prepossessions, he was prepared to sympathize even with the prejudices of many, who while they neglected duty, did it ignorantly in unbelief.

In their annual report for 1815, the Board thus express their continued conviction of the usefulness of his exertions. "The detailed account of the labors of brother Rice will be read with interest. Devoted to the service of God in the cause of missions and acting as agent of the Society, his endeavors to excite and direct the godly zeal of associations, to originate missionary institutions, and to contribute to the efficiency of the convention and its Board, have been active and incessant. Impressed with the importance of his past services, and believing that there are sections of our country in which his future labors may prove eminently useful, how desirable soever, on some accounts, his early removal to a missionary station may appear, the Board are of opinion that it is their real interest to continue him some time longer in his present engagements. Conformably to this conviction, they have resolved on his remaining a while their agent in the United

States. The Board most affectionately commend him to the favor and kind offices of their christian brethren. The fraternal manner in which his past services have been welcomed, combined with the high importance of the work in which he is engaged, create an assurance that he will continue to be received as a brother beloved."

The lively zeal with which he continued to prosecute his labors was so unremitting, as to leave but little time even for correspondence with his most beloved relatives. In a letter to his brother, he observes, "excuse me my dear brother; certainly it is not a pleasure to me to be the occasion of disappointment to my friends. The object I have in view, I dare not suffer myself for a moment to lose sight of, or to omit any opportunity of promoting. To this every thing else must yield, and when in the prosecution of this, disappointments are occasioned to my friends, I can only regret the fact without being able to prevent it."

In a similar strain he thus writes to his brother, October 20, 1815. "Never, that I recollect, did I leave any spot with more painful and melancholy reluctance, than I felt in parting with our parents and your family, on the day when last I had the pleasure of visiting my native place. A sort of gloomy presentiment, that I should not see our dear mother again, oppressed my spirits. I had travelled all the preceding night, and nothing but a severe conviction of duty which left no alternative, could

have compelled me to leave your house that day. My anxiety to hasten a companion to my dear Judson, at Rangoon, (as I could not go myself at present) induced me to visit Massachusetts at that time, and occasioned a small deviation from the track I had marked out, and submitted to the Board as that which I wished to pursue. I perceive, my dear brother, that you are mistaken as to the causes which allot so small a portion of my time to the place of my nativity—the fire-side of my dear parents and brother. The only reason is, the interests of the great object to which my little life is devoted, require my presence elsewhere. I have said to myself, *after completing what of the Lord's business he has assigned me, I shall have time enough in this world or in the next to enjoy my friends.*"

During the year 1815–16, his self-denying, laborious efforts, were continued chiefly in the western and southern states. In closing his report to the Board he says:

"The societies mentioned in this letter as auxiliary to the Board, and those mentioned in my letter of May, 1815, exhibit the pleasing and very encouraging fact of at least SEVENTY-ONE MISSION SOCIETIES, distinctly combining their means and their exertions in the noble design of aiding the heralds of the cross to *preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

In closing this communication, it is impossible for me to abstain from an expression of devout grati-

tude to the Father of Mercies for his great goodness in conveying me in safety through the various and extended journeyings of so many thousand miles the year past; frequently in lonely ways, usually solitary, and sometimes in the night: but no disaster has been permitted to occur. Also the uniformly favourable countenance and kindness of the people in all places through which my course has led, have alleviated the painfulness of toil, exposure, and fatigue; beguiled anxious solicitude, supported and strengthened a confidence in the enlarged success of the undertaking, and claim my warmest thanks."

The following letter from Mr. Judson, may be here appropriately inserted.

RANGOON, *August* 3, 1816.

"MY DEAR BROTHER RICE:—I hope you will believe that the reason of my writing to you only one short letter hitherto, was not that I had no desire to write you, or that I doubted whether a letter would be very acceptable to you; but simply, because I have never till the present time, had any reason to hope that a letter forwarded from this place, would reach America before you left it. From a late letter of yours, however, to Dr. Carey, I conclude you will receive this.

"You remember, that the furlough we gave you at the Isle of France, extended to two years only. Little did we then think, that three or four years

would elapse before we met again. I rejoice, however, that you are able to give so good an account of your time. I congratulate you on the success which has crowned your labors in America. It really surpasses my highest expectations. Still permit me to hope, that, as you are spending the prime of your life in such valuable services in America, for the heathen, you will give them your personal services in your old age; and that we shall unite our prayers and labors, and finally, lay our bones together in an eastern clime.

"Since you left us, we have been called to rejoice and to mourn over a dear child. He died three months ago, at the age of eight months. So that we are now reduced to our former solitary situation. We are, however, daily expecting brother Hough and family. He has already sent round a press and types, which have arrived in the river, and expects to follow himself, the first opportunity. I do not doubt that you have written me by Mr. Hough, but I have not received any letters that he may have brought from America.

"I have been almost blind for four months past, afflicted at the same time with a nervous affection in the head, which has unfitted me for any exertion. I was taken in the midst of the last hot season, on the eleventh of April. I have at times almost despaired of recovery, but have been a little better lately. I was on the point of sailing to Bengal, when the news of brother Hough's arrival there,

induced me to wait until he should be settled here, when I could leave more conveniently.

"I have completed a grammar of the Burman language, which I hope will be useful to you; also a tract, which I hope to get printed as soon as Mr. Hough arrives.

"If any ask what success I meet with among the natives?—tell them to look at Otaheite, where the missionaries labored nearly twenty years, and not meeting with the slightest success, began to be neglected by all the christian world, and the very name of Otaheite began to be a shame to the cause of missions; and now the blessing begins to come. Tell them to look at Bengal also, where Dr. Thomas had been laboring seventeen years, that is, from 1783 to 1800, before the first convert, Krishno, was baptised. When a few converts are once made, things move on. But it requires a much longer time than I have been here, to make a first impression on a heathen people. If they ask again, what prospect of ultimate success is there?—tell them, as much as that there is an Almighty and faithful God who will perform his promises, and no more. If this does not satisfy them, beg them to let me stay and try it, and to let you come, and to give us our *bread;* or, if they are unwilling to risk their bread on such a forlorn hope as has nothing but the WORD OF GOD to sustain it, beg of them at least not to prevent others from giving us bread. And

if we live some twenty or thirty years, they may hear from us again.

"I have already written many things home about Rangoon. But one large parcel which I forwarded to Bengal, is lost, I fear, not having had any accounts of it. This climate is good, better than any other part of the East. But it is a most filthy, wretched place. Missionaries must not calculate on the least comfort, but what they find in one another and their work. However, if a ship was lying in the river, ready to convey me to any part of the world I should choose, and that too with the entire approbation of all my christian friends, I would prefer dying to embarking. This is an immense field; and since the Serampore missionaries have left, it is wholly thrown on the hands of the American Baptists. If we desert it, the blood of the Burmans will be required of us. Nancy unites with me in an affectionate remembrance; we both long to see you again. Yours ever,

A. JUDSON."

The reader will form some idea of the multiplied privations and toils of Mr. Rice at this time, by reference to a familiar letter to his brother, dated October 29, 1816. "The 25th of July, I left Philadelphia, and arrived in Warrenton, N. C. on the evening of Friday, 2d August, at least 370 miles. After attending the North Carolina general meeting of correspondence, near that place, I took stage on the night of Monday, about midnight, having been

occupied after meeting, till that hour, in writing, without going to bed, and about 2 o'clock, on Wednesday morning, arrived again in Richmond, Va. more than 100 miles from Warrenton. In the evening of the same day, preached in Richmond, wrote twenty-one letters on Thursday, besides doing some other necessary business, and at 3 o'clock, on Friday morning, left that city, and preached in the evening of the same day, in Goochland county, forty miles from Richmond. At a yearly meeting, same place, preached again on Saturday at 12 o'clock, and on the Sabbath, that is, the next day, was with the Appamattox Association; preaching in Prince Edward county, about sixty miles from where I was in Goochland county.

"The following Sabbath, 18th of August, I was with the County Line Association, in Caswell county, N. C., having had but an easy week's ride of about 166 miles; and was with the Mountain Association, in Burke county, N. C. the next Sabbath, having gone that week, 214 miles. The following Saturday, was with the Shiloh Association, in Culpeper county, Va., having been under the necessity of riding *more than four hundred miles in less than six days.* Was at the Green Brier Association the next Sabbath, in Monroe county, Va., having gone in the week, the latter part of which was rainy, about 222 miles. The next Sabbath, at the North District Association, Montgomery county,

Kentucky, 290 miles; raining all the week, excessively bad roads, mountains, rivers, creeks, and mud—my health began to be impaired. The following Sabbath, with the Franklin Association, near Frankfort, Ky., only about 100 miles riding for me the whole week, nearly three days of which, were spent in Lexington, preaching, hearing preaching, visiting, and necessary business, &c. &c.

"The Friday following, I was at the Union Association, in Knox county, Ky., and left it the same evening, intending to be with the Caney Fork Association, in Warren county, Tennessee, on the Sabbath; but after very severe riding, failed, finding the distance too great, and unable to procure a fresh horse by the way; but the next Sabbath, 6th of October, was with the Flint River Association, Bedford county, Tennessee, having gone about 300 miles in the week. The next Sabbath, was with the Tennessee Association, in Blount county, Tennessee, 226 miles the week's ride. The Friday following was at the opening of the Broad River Association, in Rutherford county, N. C. Left that on the same afternoon, and on Sabbath morning, by meeting-time, was with the Pee Dee Association, in Montgomery county, N. C.; riding between the two, about 120 miles.

"Being obliged to ride in the night, on Friday night I got lost. The roads in this part of our country, are none of them fenced, and are mostly through woods; I had to go that night in by roads,

but little travelled—missed the way, got out of roads, at length, into mere paths, and ultimately, lost the path—found myself alone in a dreary wilderness, unable to discover the point of compass; totally ignorant which way to direct my course, to find any road or habitation of men. I stopped, and besought the Lord to lead me out—rose from my supplications, and attempted to advance. In less perhaps, than two minutes, certainly, in less than five, fell into the road which conducted me to the place that I calculated to reach that night, at which, I arrived about 1 o'clock. Have now just come from attending the Sandy Creek Association, and am on my way to the Charleston. Such is the outline of my course since leaving Philadelphia. Frequently, after completing a day's ride, instead of indulging in the repose which nature solicits, it is necessary for me to employ my pen; however, fatigues too often overcome me, or perhaps I too easily yield to the inclination for rest."

In noticing these labors, the Board make the following commendatory remarks: "The Board have reviewed, with sincere satisfaction, the unwearied and successful exertions, during the year past, of brother Luther Rice, their agent. They can scarcely conceive the possibility of his having occupied a sphere of greater usefulness. It is with real pleasure they have observed that the offered emoluments and honors of the Presidency of a respectable university in Kentucky, have not been able to divert

him from his missionary career. He is appointed, until the convention shall meet, to continue his exertions to originate new societies, and to systematize measures for an easy and regular intercommunication between the Board and the mission institutions. In his anticipated labors, he is affectionately commended to the care of the Lord Jesus, and to the hospitable attention and fraternal aid of all who long for the glory of the latter days."

The first triennial meeting of the Convention was held in Philadelphia, in May, 1817. How far the efforts of Mr. Rice had been successful, will be ascertained by referring to the wide-spread interest in the mission cause, which at this time was beginning to be felt in the Baptist churches of the United States. His own sanguine wishes were more than realized, as was frequently intimated by expressions of gratitude recorded in his journal. Just before the triennial meeting of the Convention in 1817, he made on his birth-day the following note: "In reviewing the year past, much occurs to awaken emotions of thankfulness and gratitude to the Father of Mercies. My journeyings have been great, generally lonely, and sometimes very fatiguing; but my life, health, and limbs, have been preserved—strength has indeed been equal to the day. Praised be the name of the Lord.

"By my journal, it appears that I have travelled, since entering upon my thirty-third year, which closes this day, seven thousand eight hundred miles,

and, since leaving Philadelphia the 25th of last July, have received from various sources, and on various accounts, $3,629 44¼. As this amount has been mostly contributed for missionary purposes, the fact, and the amount, furnish gratifying proof of the progressive state of missionary views, impressions, and zeal among the Baptists in the United States. May this cause advance with increasing vigor and success, till the world shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord."

About this period, letters were received by Mr. Rice from his companions in labor, whom he had left on heathen ground, and with whom he had expected soon to be reunited. His return had been deferred, from time to time, by what he and many of his friends conceived to be the stern demand of duty. The communications of Mr. and Mrs. Judson have regard to this subject, and indicate the very tender attachment which was entertained, as well as their deep solicitude, that he should again join them in the mission.

"RANGOON, *October* 23, 1818.

"MY DEAR BROTHER RICE:—Yours of June and September, 1817, are before me. What shall I say in reply? Your mention of ten years has cut off the little hope I had remaining of uniting with you, as an assistant, in missionary labors. It seems that our paths have been diverging from the Isle of France, until they have terminated in scenes of labor the most remote and dissimilar possible; but

I trust that we have both been guided aright, and that whatever local relation our bones may finally sustain in this world, our spirits will at last be united in the same celestial scene—the plains of heaven—the presence of the Lamb.

"I feel disposed to pour out my regrets, but I suppose they would be unavailing. I really expect to see you no more in this world. It appears to me that the proposal of ten years is of the same use and benefit as a projecting crag in a precipice, which serves a little to break the force of the fall, but only bruises and mangles the poor wretch, who might as well go to the bottom at once. No! we shall meet no more in this world. I never said so before, but I think I may venture to say so now. We shall meet no more, unless some circumstances occur in America to induce you to change your mind very shortly.

"When I think of our very pleasant intercourse on board the Creole, and in our own hired house at Port Louis, I almost regret that I ever consented to your leaving me. We—that is, Nancy and myself—have been alone in the world ever since, till within a few days. We have been through most severe and cutting trials, which I believe we have scarcely mentioned to any mortal. How much, at times, have we needed your congeniality of mind, the support of your tried attachment. When two faithful friends are united, how great is the mutual support. What happy days we spent at Budge-budge and

Fultah; what spiritual consolations and felicities we mutually imparted, when chased about by the officers of police. Have you ever seen happier days? I never have.

"Brother Hough and I have done pretty well together. He is just going to Bengal. Perhaps he will return here; perhaps he will go to Chitagong, and live there among the Mugs. If so, I hope he will be the means of great good there. We should, however, be very sorry to lose him, especially as he is a printer.

"The brethren Colman and Wheelock, and their wives, are four lovely persons. We love them much, and are very happy in their society; but our happiness is much diminished by the feeble health of the brethren. Brother Wheelock, particularly, is so consumptive, as to leave me but very little hope of his recovery. So you see that I am almost alone again. Suppose you should think of coming out, after all. But no—perhaps it is not best; perhaps the cause of missions, and of Christ, requires that you should stay in America. I leave the matter wholly to your decision; circumstances qualify you to be the most capable judge, and I see how you will decide. So, fare you well, my brother Rice; and Nancy also says, fare you well. May the God of heaven bless you in all your ways; may he be your shield, and your exceeding great reward.

"What shall I do with your relics? Your papers we have kept from the inspection of any person. How shall I dispose of them? Your books also? Those few which we owned together, I should like to keep as my own, if for no other reason. Campbell also, and some others, with which the mission is already supplied, I should like to retain. Say something on this subject.

"I see you, pale and thin, sitting in Rolt's little room, and writing out texts of scripture, relating to the Abrahamic covenant. I see you playing the flute on board ship, while that queer Frenchman is taking you off, cap and all. I see you sitting on the side of Port Louis hill, looking away towards Madagascar, and anon towards the East. I see you embarking in the American vessel, when circumstances prevented any other leave-taking than touching our hats. I see you seated in your wagon, posting through the States, now haranguing in an Atlantic sea-port, and now penetrating an Indian forest. When shall I see you next? Who can tell what the receding mists of futurity will disclose? But one thing we know: the shades of death will soon gather on both our paths—will soon shroud us from mortal sight. Shall we then appear before the throne? Shall such a sinner as I? O, to grace how great a debtor!

Your ever affectionate brother,

A. JUDSON."

RANGOON MISSION HOUSE, *July* 5, 1819.

"DEAR BROTHER RICE:—Little did we think at our sorrowful parting at the Isle of France, that almost seven years would elapse, and we should be still writing you. For the first two or three years after you left us, we hardly dared write a letter, thinking you would have left America before it would reach you; and even for the two or three last years, we have been hoping that unforseen events would transpire, which would clearly discover to your mind, that the path of duty led directly to Burmah. We have ever felt that though the breach which your absence has made in our little family, would be filled only by yourself, yet we ought to acquiesce, and quietly submit, if the advancement of the mission made it necessary. We have ever been convinced, that you being on the ground of operation, know better than we, what part or parts of the missionary machine needed to be kept in motion, and what means were the most necessary to excite that motion. Hence, we have till now, patiently submitted to the trial which your long absence has occasioned. But now, my dear brother Rice, we need missionaries on the ground more than any thing beside.

"At the end of six years residence in this country, Mr. Judson finds himself *still alone* in missionary work. He wishes *now* to devote all his time to preaching the gospel to this people. But tracts are to be written; portions of scripture are to be trans-

lated, and many other necessary things must be done—but who will do them? Besides, should he be sick or die, the work which is now commenced, would immediately stop. It is true, that *one good* missionary is on the ground, and preparing for future usefulness. But the weak state of his lungs forbids our expecting much from him in the preaching way, at least, for a few years. You, my dear brother, are the person that we need just in this stage of the mission. Your age, judgment, and experience, qualify you in a peculiar manner to be of most essential service in those cases of difficulty and trial, to which we are so frequently subject in this country. Your correct ear, and aptness for acquiring languages, together with the means and helps which Mr. J. has prepared, would enable you in *one year* from the time of your arrival, to *begin* to communicate religious truths to this perishing people.

"The way *seems* to be opening for the spread of the gospel here; the few seed which have been sown, begin to spring up, the millenial days of the church are rapidly advancing; come, O! come, and reap a harvest of the souls from among the Burmans. We are aware that it will appear exceedingly necessary that you should stay in America, in order to keep those plans in operation, which you have commenced. But if you should come, would not God raise up some one to fill your place? Will not others feel more the necessity of

actual exertion, when they see that those duties which devolved on you, are left for their performance? The mantle of Elijah *needed not* to be worn by an Elisha, while in possession of its original owner; so no young man will feel the necessity of taking your place, till they see it vacated by your absence.

"I will urge two reasons more, and I have done. 1st. This is a delightful climate. The liver complaint is never known here. Europeans can bear the heat of the sun in the middle of the day, without feeling the least injurious effect. Instances of longevity among the natives, are numerous; perhaps, more so, than in any part of the world. According to the course of nature, a missionary whose constitution is good, has greater prospect of a *long life*, than in most other missionary stations. 2d. It is a good situation to grow in grace, and prepare for heaven. Here, we see the destructive, the fatal effects of sin, when left to rage without the restraints which the gospel imposes. Here we see the worth, the preciousness of that grace, which, while it leaves some to be filled with their own devices, raises others from the lowest state of degradation, and qualifies them to become partakers of that happiness which is kept in reversion for those who love God.

"Here too, we are compelled from day to day to trust in the mighty arm of Jehovah for support and protection, and to depend entirely on him for the

outpouring of the spirit, without the influences of which, our most persevering exertions to convert the heathen, will prove ineffectual. Come then, dear brother, and spend your last days in using those means for bestowing happiness on others, which are the most directly calculated to advance personal piety, and a preparation for eternal glory.

Ever affectionately yours,

NANCY JUDSON."

Closing his report for 1817, he says: "Since the date of my letter of the 19th of June, 1816, I have travelled 6,600 miles—in populous and in dreary portions of country—through wildernesses and over rivers—across mountains and valleys—in heat and cold—by day and by night—in weariness, and painfulness, and fastings, and loneliness; but not a moment has been lost for want of health; no painful calamity has fallen to my lot; no peril has closed upon me; nor has fear been permitted to prey on my spirits; nor even inquietude to disturb my peace. Indeed, constantly has the favorable countenance of society towards the great objects of the mission animated my hopes, while thousands of condescending personal attentions and benefits to myself and the cause, have awakened emotions, which it is alike impossible to conceal, or to find terms sufficiently delicate and expressive to declare; and the fact, that although so large a portion of the whole time has been unavoidably taken up in passing from place to place, I have, besides many other

aids and liberalities, received for the missionary object, in cash and subscriptions, more than four thousand dollars, could not fail to create a confidence of success in the general concern, which nothing but a reverse, most unlikely to occur, can possibly destroy. This fact, too, is the more animating and sustaining, because, while the sum is but little larger than what passed through my hands last year, the time of collecting it has been considerably shorter, and a much smaller proportion of it consists of remittances from mission societies; remittances being this year made by the delegates to the convention. This, therefore, in conjunction with the multiplying of mission societies, especially considering some other things not necessary to be here mentioned, marks decisively a regular growing increase of evangelic missionary zeal; and who can repress the exclamation—'the Lord hath done great things for us! blessed be the Lord God, who only doeth wondrous things; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory!'"

About this time, Mr. Rice suggested the plan of issuing under the patronage of the Board, a quarterly publication, the object of which should be to diffuse information on the subject of missions. Such a periodical was commenced, entitled the Latter Day Luminary, which was ably conducted, and greatly promotive of the important object for which it was originated. In the following extract of a letter, dated October 24, 1817, he refers to this subject.

"The good hand of the Lord has been upon me ever since parting with you. His continued and multiplied favors claim unceasing exalted gratitude, love, and obedience. O that I were more as I ought to be?

"You will perceive by the foregoing proposals, that the plan of a quarterly publication, on account of which my late visit to Boston was undertaken, has succeeded; this of course will be an object of much attention and labor with me in connection with other objects to which my life is devoted. The arrangements of the business will require me to visit Philadelphia once a quarter, and to spend perhaps rather more than a fourth part of my time in that city. At the Hartford Association, we had a happy season, also at the Philadelphia Association, and at the Dover Association in Virginia, all of which I have visited since leaving Northborough. At the last mentioned, the collection for the mission amounted to $272.

"My route onward will take me into North Carolina, then back again north-westwardly to Pittsburg, through Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and into Georgia, and then back again to Philadelphia."

CHAPTER IX.

NECESSITY OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FELT BY MR. RICE—HISTORY OF DENOMINATION REFERRED TO—EFFORTS TO ROUSE THE CHURCHES TO ACTION—SEMINARY OPENED IN PHILADELPHIA—LETTER—PURCHASE OF LOT IN WASHINGTON—COLLEGE BUILDINGS COMMENCED—RESOLUTION OF CONVENTION IN 1820—CHARTER OBTAINED—COLLEGE OPENED—FLATTERING PROSPECTS—MR. RICE APPOINTED AGENT AND TREASURER—COLUMBIAN STAR COMMENCED.

During the extensive and frequent tours which Mr. Rice was compelled to make in the prosecution of his agency, he perceived among the rapidly growing churches of the Baptist denomination, a need for systematic exertions to improve the rising ministry. This necessity had been increasing, with the advances which the various orders of society were making in general knowledge. The time had passed by when those who filled the offices of public teachers, could expect, without intelligence or education, to gain the ear of the community. God had in a very signal manner given testimony of his approbation to many unlearned, but faithful men, who in the earlier history of our country, when society generally was in a crude and unimproved state, had gone forth, declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ.

That these men should have obtained the confidence and attention of society, may be attributed in some measure to peculiar circumstances. They were in some parts of our country the victims of cruel persecution; and the endeavour being made to coerce them into submission by the dominant religionists of the day, they naturally became the objects of sympathy. All were inclined to give them an opportunity of vindicating their sentiments, in many instances for no other reason than because they had been so violently opposed. Though they could not compare with their opposers in respect to wealth and education, in other particulars they were far superior. With good physical constitutions, and naturally vigorous minds, there was felt and manifested a zealous regard for the divine will. They had not only been baptised in water, but into the spirit of Christ their Lord.

While on the one hand, they saw in too many instances, the office of the ministry occupied by bigoted, or indolent and vicious men, on the other they discovered crowds, unwarned, pressing down to death. Under these circumstances they could not consent to remain silent. Constrained by the love of Christ, and by love to souls, they lifted up their voices to warn and persuade their fellowmen to flee the wrath to come. Neither flatteries nor frowns could deter them from fulfilling their work. Crowds waited on their ministrations, and the truth proclaimed in simplicity and godly since-

rity, was rendered effectual by the divine blessing unto conversion. The triumphs of the cross continued to extend into those more newly settled portions of our country, where even the forms of religion were almost unknown.

It will not be surprising that the success of these men, especially when compared with the little effected by those who were better educated, should induce a state of mind unfavorable to the mental improvement of the ministry. While the pioneers were not opposed to learning, but lamented its absence in regard to themselves, their successors were in danger of undervaluing it, and of failing to use such means of cultivation as were within their reach. This, to some extent, was the fact. In many portions of our country, little or no systematic effort had been made to elevate the standard of ministerial improvement. This was seen by the subject of this memoir, and his heart was moved to attempt a change. Although he was not permitted to witness the completion of his wishes, it cannot be doubted, *that to him, more than any other man, may be attributed the change which has been effected in our denomination.* Wherever he went, east or west, north or south, he brought the subject of ministerial improvement before the minds of his brethren, not merely in his public addresses, but in conversation, and in extensive correspondence by letter.

At an early period of his efforts to promote the cause of education, a school was opened in Philadelphia, for the instruction of young men devoted to the ministry, under the care of Rev. Dr. Staughton and Rev. Ira Chase. Having seen such an institution commenced, he determined to spare no pains in promoting its interests. Reference is made to this subject in the extract of a letter that follows.

PITTSBURG, PA. *February* 22, 1819.

"VERY DEAR BROTHER:—On arriving in Philadelphia lately, I found your welcome letter, and meant to have replied before leaving the city. I often look forward in the hope that the time shall ere long arrive when I can have a little leisure. As yet, however, things appear to be tending in the opposite direction, and concerns and labors are multiplying on my poor hands, rather than lessening. Indeed, I see no reason to calculate on any other than a life of toil and exertion to the end of it. It is, I hope, a happiness to me, rather than a burden, to labor in so glorious a cause.

"I am now on a tour to the west and south, and hope to be back again to Philadelphia by the first of May.

"The missionary cause is still going on well. An institution for improving the education of the ministry, connected with the Board of Missions, is now in operation; five or six students are there already, and more are expected soon. This object

I regard as very important, but to carry it forward will require a great deal of effort."

That the reader may be in possession of the sentiments of the Convention, at their second triennial meeting in 1820, and thus learn more definitively the extent of Mr. Rice's influence, in relation to the subject of education, an extract from their address will here be inserted. At this time the students at the institution in Philadelphia had increased to the number of eighteen.

"We are far from thinking that learning can make a minister of Christ; we are assured that unsanctified literature, as well as superior talents, elevated stations, riches, and worldly honors, may prove a great curse; and that it has been often abused to the vilest of purposes. It is still one of the excellent attainments of the christian, he must add, to his faith and virtue, knowledge. It enters into the character of those able pastors promised by God to his church—they are to feed men with knowledge. Ministers, according to our sentiments, must be gracious men, renewed and sanctified by the spirit of God; they must possess gifts from Christ for their office, and must be called of God to engage in it. But these gifts they may either neglect or improve, according to the intimation given in the exhortations of Paul to Timothy: 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee;' 'Give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine;' 'Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that

needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;' 'Meditate on these things—give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.' Here their duty, as well as danger, is described. The word of God declares, that the pastor must not be a novice; that he must be apt to teach, and must speak in a manner easy to be understood—which no man can do, unless he is well acquainted with the subject on which he discourses."

Such was the success of these incipient measures, and such the encouragement furnished by the churches, that it was deemed expedient to attempt the origination of a college at some central point, from which a beneficial influence might go forth to every part of the land. In looking round for a suitable location, many interested in the object, were impressed with the belief that none more eligible could be found than the city of Washington. The following paper, prepared in 1819, will indicate the manner in which the present site of the Columbian College was selected:

"Lot of land adjoining the city of Washington, for a College and Theological Institution.—It is understood that a lot suitable for the above mentioned purposes, every way eligible, may be obtained for six thousand dollars:—We, the subscribers, therefore, deeply impressed with the importance of procuring such a lot, for such object, do solemnly pledge ourselves to make purchase of said

lot for said object, provided adequate funds for the same shall be confided to us—it being distinctly understood and engaged that said lot shall be for the use of a college, and of a theological institution, under the direction of the 'General Missionary Convention of the Baptist denomination in the United States.'

Signed O. B. Brown,
Luther Rice,
Enoch Reynolds,
S. H. Cone."

Writing to his brother shortly after, Mr. Rice says: "We have at present, fifteen students at Philadelphia, in a course of education suited to the ministry, and have bought a piece of land near the city of Washington, on which, to place buildings to accommodate the institution. My poor hands are more than full, but I hope much good will be done."

In his report at the meeting of the convention, in May, 1820, reference is thus made to the same subject: "It has afforded me no small pleasure to find it convenient, incidentally to the other matters on hand, to bestow some attention on the object of providing at Washington, a site for the institution to promote the education of the ministry, and ultimately for the foundation of a college, under the direction of the general convention. Considerations of no ordinary influence, induced the brethren, Brown, Cone, Reynolds, and myself, to open a

subscription paper for this purpose. The success has amply justified our calculations.

"To pay for the ground, or lot of 46½ acres, to erect a building—to endow a professorship, and for some other points in the general concern, nearly $10,000 have already been subscribed, and part of it paid. This being the result of the incidental attention of an individual, with comparatively little aid from others, and that too, for but little more than half a year, demonstrates the practicability of accomplishing a most important object in a short time. Thus far, the hand of a kind Providence has signally favored the design. A building has already been commenced, 116 by 47, which will contain rooms enough to accommodate from eighty to one hundred students. It only wants the countenance of the convention, with the blessing of heaven, to insure complete success.

"In closing this communication, suffer me to express the deep impression I cannot but feel, that the arrival of the period of this convention, brings with it a crisis, particularly in relation to the education of pious young brethren in the ministry, of the utmost moment. May the blessed Redeemer preside in the meeting, and direct to the adoption of such measures as shall promote the prosperity of Zion, and the display of his own glory."

So important did the convention assembled in Philadelphia, consider the project of locating an institution at Washington, that to enable them to

embrace it in their regular operations, they proceeded to alter their constitution, and to adopt the following resolutions:

"1. *Resolved*, That the Institution for the education of gospel ministers, be located at the city of Washington, or in its vicinity, in the District of Columbia; and that the Board be directed to cause its removal thither whenever suitable preparations shall be made for its reception in that place, and when, in their opinion, such removal shall be deemed expedient.

"2. *Resolved*, That this convention accept of the premises tendered to them for the site of an institution for the education of gospel ministers, and for a college, adjoining the city of Washington; and that the Board be directed to take measures, as soon as convenient, for obtaining a legal title to the same. And that the Board be further directed, to keep the institution, already in a state of progress, first in view, and not to incur expenses beyond the amount of funds which may be obtained for the establishment of either of the institutions."

The Board proceeded at once, to carry out the instructions of the convention, by the erection of a college building, 117 feet in length, and 47 feet in breadth, containing accommodations for about one hundred students, and costing about $30,000. Beside this, they caused also to be erected, two houses, 25 by 40 feet, two stories high, for the use of the professors. All these were so far in progress at the

time of the meeting of the Board, in 1821, that a committee appointed for the purpose, report in the following commendatory language:

"The committee on the general literary concerns of the convention, respectfully report: That having examined and duly considered the various documents which have been laid before them in relation to that subject, they cannot refrain from expressing the high satisfaction which they feel, in common with other members of the Board, in witnessing the rapid progress of the establishment at Washington, and the harmony which has attended all its movements. The proceedings of the trustees, which appear to have been marked with the greatest unanimity, are entirely satisfactory to the committee; and the prospect of bringing into successful operation at an early period, both branches of a seminary, which promises extensive usefulness, in promoting knowledge among those who are the future hope of the church; and in the more effectual preparation for the sacred work of those, who are destined by the God of Zion, to bear the tidings of salvation to dying sinners, both in our land, and in foreign regions, should be regarded as an event propitious to our warmest desires, demanding our fervent gratitude to the Father of all mercies."

In referring to the rise and early history of the Columbian College, it may be stated, that the plan on which it was commenced, has never been completed. Had the institution gone forward accord-

ing to the sanguine expectations of its friends, several other buildings, on an enlarged scale, would have been erected. "All the buildings," in the language of the superintending committee, "were intended to range with the cardinal points of the compass, and to exhibit the best possible view from every direction, combining economy, utility, convenience, and magnificence." That these objects might have been secured, no one who understands the plan, and has seen the location, can fail to acknowledge.

Having obtained a charter, the regular college exercises commenced on the second Wednesday in January, 1822, under the direction of an able faculty. Mr. Rice was appointed agent and treasurer, and the prospects of the institution were, for two or three years, truly flattering. Referring to this fact in his annual report for 1823, he thus remarks: "The concerns of the Columbian College have necessarily engaged a large portion of my attention. The success, however, has surpassed, by far, what was contemplated at the last meeting of the convention. Little was it then expected, that by the time of the present meeting, about sixty students should be found in the institution, and a junior class half way through its year. Great exertions have been requisite in the financial department, and great difficulties have been encountered, but the good hand of the Lord has been signally manifest and favorable.

"Although encompassed with infirmities and imperfections, I have endeavored to apply the feeble talents allotted me by the great Arbiter of all things, faithfully and diligently, to the objects of my appointment. For innumerable instances of kindness from my friends and the public, and for the continued and abundant mercies of the Lord, I would fain express the gratitude which I ought to feel."

At the meeting of the convention in 1823, a resolution was adopted, expressive of gratitude for the "generous devotion of the agent to the college, and other concerns of the convention, manifested by the appropriation of his whole time and compensation to promote their interests."

An important object which about this period engaged the attention of Mr. Rice, was the origination and circulation of a weekly periodical, entitled the Columbian Star. It was published at Washington, under the editorial management of the Rev. James D. Knowles, and subsequently, Rev. Baron Stow.

This chapter will close by extracts of letters from Mr. Judson. Writing from Rangoon under date of May 7th, 1821, he says: "I frequently wish that I had seen Philadelphia and Washington, and the scenes among which you are so much employed, that I might be able to form a more definite idea of your situation and movements. And I wish too, that you had once been in Rangoon, that you

might sometimes look away and see the kyoung, which is my house; and zayat, which is my office. I am now writing in the zayat, at one of those little tables that you bought at the Isle of France. It is almost the only thing that remains of our common property. Time and worms have devastated trunks, and books, &c.; and they will soon treat our bodies in the same manner—will they not my brother? But there is a world, where moth and rust corrupt not, and there I will introduce you to my precious little Burman church; and there they will meet their now unknown benefactor, of whom, I sometimes tell them."

In another lettter, dated Rangoon, February 6th, 1822, he remarks: "I have received your two short, and almost illegible letters of last March, and it is hardly necessary for me to say, how fully I enter into all your views and wishes in regard to the new college, and whatever tends to raise the character of the Baptist denomination, and promote the cause of Christ at large, in the United States. Your labors will be ultimately appreciated, and the page of history will do you ample justice, notwithstanding the dissentient voice of the narrow-minded of the present day. Only be not elated by any success; walk softly before God; and forget not, amid the hurry of business, to cultivate that daily communion with the Lord and Saviour, which is the life and happiness of the soul.

"I wished that we might live and labor together; but I hope, that though separated, we are both doing important service for the same master, and perhaps, in ways best adapted to our respective capacities. I little thought when the boat rowed away from the ship in the harbor of Port Louis, and I left you standing on the deck, that I should see your face no more. Poor Nancy has gone on a pilgrimage for health and life, to the shrine of old England. Perhaps she will visit America, but I expect that she will return from England in the same ship. Her absence is universally regretted by our Burman acquaintance. Many of them come to see me, apparently for no other purpose, than to inquire whether there is any news from Mummah, (Madam,) as she is called."

He thus closes a communication written August 1st, 1823: "My last from you, was dated May 15th, 1822. You are evidently absorbed in the college. But it is a great and worthy object; and there is no truer maxim, that a man never does any thing to purpose, unless his whole soul is in it. Only let not your multifarious concerns interrupt communion with God, and the daily enjoyment of closet religion. Soon, my brother, all these visible scenes will be passed away, and many of the objects which now assume an overwhelming importance, will, in the calm light of eternity, appear to have been empty bubbles, blown

into great consequence by our own foolish passions. Thus let me preach to you, and thus I desire to preach to myself. I hope that Mrs. J. will return, accompanied by one or two good missionaries. I cannot help indulging a faint hope that you will come yourself.

Most affectionately and ever yours,

A. JUDSON."

CHAPTER X.

INCREASING INTEREST OF MR. RICE IN THE PROSPERITY OF THE COLLEGE—PERSONAL EFFORTS ON ITS BEHALF—CONTRACT FOR ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS—HEAVY DEBT CREATED—PUBLIC CONFIDENCE DIMINISHED—SICKNESS OF MR. RICE—SEPARATION OF COLLEGE FROM CONVENTION—UNPLEASANT DIFFERENCES OF OPINION—RESIGNATION OF FACULTY—VARIOUS AGENCIES EMPLOYED—REFERENCE TO THE VARIOUS CAUSES OF EMBARRASSMENT—THE MOTIVES AND CONDUCT OF MR. RICE IN THESE DIFFICULTIES—HIS UNDIMINISHED ZEAL TO SERVE THE INSTITUTION—LETTER TO A FRIEND—SANGUINE HOPE OF ULTIMATE SUCCESS.

It has been already intimated, that in carrying forward the Columbian College to that maturity which would make it a general blessing to the denomination, and the world, Mr. Rice was ready to make every personal sacrifice. The object which filled his eye and heart, was a noble one, and with steady aim he directed all his efforts to its accomplishment. The amount of labor performed by him at this period, far exceeded all his previous efforts, and in many instances, was almost incredible. In addition to the mission agency which he still held, nearly the whole dependence of the college, for funds, rested upon him. Scarce-

ly allowing time for meals or repose, he was continually employed in travelling from place to place, and conducting a correspondence with persons in all parts of the United States.

Up to the convention meeting, in 1823, the expectations of the friends of the college were fully realized. Although at that time, a debt of $30,000 had been contracted, a confident belief was entertained, that it would become all its warmest supporters could desire. But it was destined to pass through the most trying adversity. Notwithstanding the large amount already due, in consequence of the continued increase of students in 1824, the Board contracted for the erection of another spacious building, depending alone on funds yet uncollected, and even not yet subscribed. From this period, the institution began to retrogade. The pecuniary liabilities of the Board were every day increasing, while public confidence was suffering continual diminution. In the midst of these unexpected reverses, some unhappy differences arose among the faculty and board of trustees, which increased the peril of the institution. The new building which had gone up a single story, involving a serious expense, was suspended, while the number of students in attendance had considerably diminished.

In the midst of these difficulties, Mr. Rice was brought to the borders of the grave by sickness, supposed to be brought on by anxiety of mind

together with the increased exertions he felt himself compelled to make. The following letter addressed to his brother will furnish some idea of the state of his mind at this crisis.

"You have probably heard that I have been sick, I was confined to the house three weeks. It was an attack of fever which threatened to become a fatal typhus—for a few days it was thought by myself and by my friends, a very doubtful case, whether I should recover. But the Lord has shown his great mercy in the case and I am now well again, though I have not yet gained my usual strength. I experienced great mercy, too, when at the lowest point, for which I desire to be thankful; for although distinctly sensible of the danger of my situation, and quite doubtful in my own mind which way the case would turn, I felt, I trust a heavenly calm, and composure of spirit, and resignation to the blessed will of the Lord, and no alarm at the idea of dying. I endeavored at that solemn moment, to examine distinctly the ground of my hope, and blessed be the Lord, it remained unshaken! I would fain hope the life spared by his compassion, may be more entirely consecrated to the glory and service of the adorable Redeemer."

At the meeting of the convention 1826, it was ascertained, much to the regret of all, that the debt had greatly increased. By the discussion of college concerns, involving as they did many conflicting interests, the proceedings were marked by less har-

mony than usual. After a protracted consideration of the subject, it was deemed most expedient to separate the educational from the missionary operations, making the latter a distinct and exclusive object, to which the convention should bend its efforts. Over the college the convention was to exercise no control, except to nominate persons, from among whom the Board of trustees were to be chosen.

The dissatisfaction existing between various persons connected with the institution continued to increase, until it resulted in the resignation of the faculty, and part of the Board. Others were appointed in their places, and to satisfy those who thought Mr. Rice had been worthy of blame in these difficulties, he consented to resign as general agent and treasurer. The Rev. Elon Galusha was appointed temporarily to fill these offices. In 1827, Rev. Robert B. Semple was appointed president of the Board and general agent, and to superintend its interests removed to Washington. Mr. Rice continued to collect funds without being expected to exercise any control in their disbursement. With praiseworthy zeal, Mr. Galusha, Mr. Ball, and Mr. Clopton, succeeded in obtaining the sum of $30,000, mostly in New York and the southern states. In 1831, Mr. Semple died, having previously resigned his agency. The Rev. Abner W. Clopton, consented to assume the management of the pecuniary interests of the institution, and to attempt its final

release from embarrassment. But very soon after a plan which he suggested was beginning to promise successful deliverance, he was unexpectedly removed by the hand of death.

This series of painful disappointments in regard to the college, were sufficient to discourage the hearts, and to paralyze the hands of its friends. But Mr. Rice still retained his confidence that its rescue would be effected. Shortly after the decease of the lamented Clopton, in a letter to a friend, he thus expresses the sentiments of his heart.

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA, *May 4th*, 1833.

"VERY DEAR BROTHER:—It is with much satisfaction I can now state to you, that the sum of $2,000, with interest from the 1st of January, 1833, has been furnished by our brethren and friends in South Carolina, and has been already transmitted to the treasurer, towards the final payment of the debts of the Columbian College in the District of Columbia. The pledge of our brother, the Rev. R. M. Todd, of Cambridge, S. C., has been thus promptly redeemed, *as one of twelve* to raise $24,000. All the others will, no doubt, also be fully redeemed in due time.

"Although the deeply lamented death of brother Clopton may somewhat retard the arrival of the hour of completing the payment of all the debts of the institution, an impulse has been given to the concern, which will, with the blessing of God, I am persuaded, carry the business forward without any

material interruption or delay to this happy result. Thus the investigations, arrangements, and incipient endeavors of brother Clopton, will prove of great and effectual benefit; and I am convinced that nothing is wanting, under God, on the part of those who are variously connected with the case, but to press right on vigorously with the engagements and materials arranged, or in prospect, in order to carry the matter directly through, and to accomplish the all-important object of the undertaking. And who can say that it has not been the sovereign pleasure of the Almighty, therefore, to remove our dear brother, in whom all had so much confidence, very distinctly for the sake of showing that all means and instruments are nothing but what he makes them; that he can fulfil his purpose in ways to human view unlikely—by means, to human view insufficient and unpromising!

"Verily, '*The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear.*' Let us call to remembrance the case of Gideon's army, David, and many other instances; betake ourselves to earnest prayer, and cherish a submissive, holy confidence in God, that he will bring to pass that which is good. Indeed, I have so often marked the evident interposition of the divine hand in the affairs of that college—to give a favorable turn to a perilous crisis—that my perfect confidence as to the ultimate relief and usefulness of the institution seems not, in the smallest

degree, shaken by the late truly afflictive event;—nay, I had almost said, it is even increased, strengthened, and confirmed.

"One circumstance gives me particular encouragement and satisfaction: the number of young ministers, as well as other students, is increasing at the college. This will tend to enhance the energy and effect of prayer, on which the greatest reliance ought to be placed, touching the prosperity of the institution. Let me add—for the consideration cannot be too deeply impressed—*the proper collegiate education of young ministers is*, with me, the essential and paramount object of all my exertions.

"In affectionate christian regard, very sincerely, yours, LUTHER RICE."

It will here be proper to institute some inquiries in relation to the causes which led to such serious pecuniary embarrassments, in connection with the Columbian College. It would not be doing justice to the memory of its distinguished founder, or to the denomination with which in some measure it has been identified, if the biographer should allow this subject to pass without comment. Delicate and difficult as the task may be, faithfulness requires that it shall be attempted.

At one period in the history of the college, there was entertained towards Mr. Rice, by many of his brethren, a strong feeling of disapprobation. They were inclined to impute to him a large share of the censure in that succession of calamities which befel

the college. By some, he was treated in a manner approaching to harshness, and even virulence; others, again, were inclined to view him with a partial eye, and to consider his whole course as faultless. They regarded him, in all respects, as an injured man. The acrimonious feelings engendered by this controversy were, happily, not of long continuance. A calm survey of the whole transaction, since the excitement has passed away, furnishes abundant evidence that if there were blame to rest upon any, it might justly be borne by *all* who were prominently engaged in the enterprise.

That the subject of this memoir erred, none can doubt. This he himself believed. His expectations were too sanguine; and in the pecuniary management of the institution he was not sufficiently cautious. He was willing to assume too much responsibility in the erection of the buildings, and thus incurring heavy expenses, without an immediate prospect of funds to meet them. In taking such a course, he was not without a confident reliance on his own ability to obtain sufficient contributions from the friends of learning, to liquidate whatever debt might be contracted. In all this, the error he committed was an error of judgment. While there was allowed a degree of heedlessness in the accumulation of debt, he was, nevertheless, governed by motives of a high and noble character. The good of the denomination, and the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, were the great objects

he sought to accomplish; and, if he merited censure for injudiciously contracting these liabilities, he was not alone in the imprudence. There were others who were entitled to an equal share of the blame.

Another respect in which the course of Mr. Rice may be considered as liable to serious objection, consisted in the manner of conducting his agency. The sanguineness of his hopes, and the confidence he had in his own ability to carry forward the scheme to its ultimate triumph, prevented him from making a candid representation of the real state of things. Accustomed, himself, to look on the bright side, and knowing how easily the public mind becomes discouraged by the appearance of obstacles, he was prone to place the condition of the college in a more favorable light than facts would warrant. This was true in regard to his appeals to the public, and in his reports to the Board as agent.

While these things are alleged, it cannot be concealed that others who had the management of the institution, very greatly erred in allowing him to sustain so much of the burden, incident to the erection of the buildings, the support of the faculty, and the payment of the debts. And at the time when a system of retrenchment had just been commenced; when vigorous efforts were about to be made by him, especially, to raise funds in the south for the entire extinguishment of the debt; such was the strong feeling indulged against him, that he was

called home, and detained there for a series of months in the investigations of his accounts.

With the management of the institution he ought to have had nothing to do. As a financier, he certainly did not excel. The formation of contracts, and the disbursement of funds, should have been committed to other hands, not even should the duties of treasurer have devolved on him; simply for this reason, that all these varied labors were far more than any one man could perform. The agency alone was sufficient to engross his undivided energies.

If the Board had resolutely required him to confine his attention to the duties of the agency, while a rigid and cautious economy characterized all their expenditures, there is reason to believe, the melancholy passages in the history of the college had never been written. Mr. Rice would thus have found ample scope for his noble talents; not only in directing and increasing the benevolence of the churches throughout our land, but in awakening a greater desire to improve the rising ministry, and to advance in *general*, the interests of education. Instead of this, the labors he performed were sufficient to wear out five men of vigorous minds and iron constitutions. So far from complaining that so little was done, we have reason to be surprised, that under all the circumstances, he accomplished so much.

The most searching investigations of his conduct in connection with the embarrassment of the college, leave not the shadow of suspicion on his integrity. Never was man less tinctured with mere worldly selfishness. In his whole history as agent, he literally sought not his own; and as the event has proved, for years actually toiled without fee or reward, beyond his personal expenses. The real amount of sacrifice and suffering he endured in performing what he thought to be his duty, will never be known until the last day.

That the observations just made respecting the causes of embarrassment, are in accordance with the views entertained by Mr. Rice himself, will appear from the following extract of a letter written by him to a friend, on this subject.

"VERY DEAR BROTHER:—Permit me to present to you a brief explanation concerning the Columbian College; although a painful task, as it must place the conduct of all parties in an unfavorable aspect, connected with a result truly mournful!

"1st. Four unfortunate errors produced in the first instance, the embarrassment of the institution, viz: going in debt, too much cost and parade of faculty, incautiously crediting students and supporting beneficiaries without means, and my remaining so much of my time at the college to assist in managing its affairs, instead of being constantly out collecting funds.

"2d. This erroneous course was fallen into more readily, because at the time, funds were circulating freely through the community, and subscriptions and collections were easily obtained. But when debts had been contracted, an over proportion of faculty employed, students largely indulged on credit with beneficiaries on hand, a great change took place in the financial condition of the whole country; still hoping this state of things would prove only temporary, the corrective was not immediately applied, as it ought to have been, and serious embarrassment, at length, began to be felt."

This extract shows beyond the power of misconception, his own impression, that with others, he had erred in some things connected with the elevation of the college. From the whole financial history of this institution, we may infer that there was much improper management, and all the facts of the case, justify the conclusion, that there was too great haste to make it a highly popular institution. Those who were most intimately connected with its rise and early history, have been themselves ready to acknowledge, that too much of ostentation was intermingled with their operations. Beside, there is reason to believe, that this, his favorite project, began to occupy too large a place in the attention of the subject of this memoir. It might have been better to allow the college to gain gradually upon the affections of the denomination, and thus by degrees, to reach that elevated position which would

have given it influence, and insured its usefulness, while a considerable portion of his time should still be consecrated to the mission cause.

There is, however, a misapprehension into which the reader may be led, in surveying the details of disappointment and adversity that marked the history of the college. It may be supposed, that its reverses were wholly the result of the imprudences to which reference has been made. This is far from being the fact. The want of success in liquidating the debt, may be attributed to another cause. When the college was projected, there were but few denominational seminaries of learning in our land, and it was intended to make this a great national institution, which should mainly supply our exigencies. But subsequently, local institutions have sprung up in different parts of our country, and each state has been required to foster that which was within its own precincts. Thus the Columbian College, belonging to no particular section, but to the whole, has been left to feel the withering influence of neglect.

It ought too, to be borne in mind by the reader, that numerous as have been the calamities which this institution has suffered, it has been most signally honored of God, in sending from its walls some of the brightest and best in our own, or any other denomination. It would be invidious to mention names. Several of her alumni have closed a useful course in their master's service, and are now

reaping their reward on high; while many others in different parts of our country, are bearing the standard of truth, and waging a deadly war against the powers of darkness. And the hope may be justly entertained, that from these halls of learning, many are yet to go forth to bless the world.

The attention of the reader will now be directed to the continued exertions of Mr. Rice to rescue the college, and the deep solicitude he felt for the accomplishment of this object. In writing to a friend in South Carolina, he indulges in the following strain.

"It is my wish that all eyes, and all hearts, and all exertions, should be directed simply to the great object of freeing the college from debt. When this is done; when the edifice is fairly up and only the outside finished, we may begin to take down the staging and scaffolding, and may contemplate for a moment some of the unnecessary rubbish, as well as unnecessary jars among the builders, if we please. But at present, the single aim of all should be to save what has been done from being lost. My anxiety, as it has ever been, is still directed to the accomplishment of the great object itself, very little concerned for myself personally in this relation."

How much the improvement of the ministry occupied his thoughts, will be still farther manifest from the following brief extract of a letter, to elder Estes, of South Carolina.

VERY DEAR BROTHER:—"In the kindness of divine Providence, it so happened that I made a visit

to College Hill, last month, when I had the particular satisfaction of finding your affectionate letter of the 15th of June. Truly refreshing to my heart are such friendly communications from my dear brethren.

"I wish you had happened to fall in with brother Brookes, personally, as I think you would have been pleased with him. His views, probably, of the proper manner of conducting religious matters, would not materially differ from yours. But although in times of revival in religion, there is often much that is trashy, it is in some sense almost unavoidable that it should be so; and this makes it more exceedingly important that the ministry themselves should be well instructed, and be led to entertain correct, enlarged, and discriminating views. From this, therefore, as from every point of vision, I derive augmenting force to the conviction of the great importance of young ministers in education, piety, and every valuable attribute to constitute them *good ministers* of Jesus Christ; *workmen that need not to be ashamed*, rightly dividing the word of truth.

"And O my dear brother, should it please God to increase the students of the Columbian College to sixty or seventy only, and once more grant a revival among them, and convert some dozen or twenty more, and call several of those converts to the blessed work of the ministry, what an ample recompense it would be for all the toils and sacrifices that have yet been employed in the case! And if the

number of students should be still more considerably multiplied, and it should please the Father of mercies from time to time to pour his spirit upon them, as have often happened in some institutions at the north, under the conduct of pious men, what a happy thing it would be for the churches, and for the whole community! For this let us pray earnestly, and without ceasing."

During all the trials of the college, hope never forsook him. It was his fixed belief that its debts would be liquidated, and though himself subject to painful sacrifices, his spirits were buoyant and cheerful. In reference to the college, he remarks, in one of his circulars:

"In relation to the college, my hope of its ultimate success and usefulness has never been shaken. Present indications, too, are favorable. The letter of brother Clopton, published some time since, and that of brother Shannon, more recently, are well calculated to awaken attention and effort in its favor. The friends in Georgia are setting a noble example, and will be followed, no doubt, by those of South Carolina and other places. They are determined, not only to do something, but to do it promptly, without waiting to see what others will perform. This will settle, without controversy, the question of saving the college.

"I once saw a building in flames, and several houses near it in danger of being fired, while a multitude stood uselessly gazing with intense anxiety to see whether those houses *would be saved* or burned!

when an individual or two earnestly called out to them to range themselves in lines, and pass buckets of water from a neighboring stream—and thus the houses were saved. Let the example of our southern friends be imitated by others; let every one do what he is willing to do, and do it promptly, without waiting to see whether the college will be saved or not—this will save it. I rejoice that the views of the friends of the institution are taking this tendency. The late movements of the board of trustees will, it is confidently believed, invigorate this course of action. The number of students, too, has been gradually increasing; so that there is good reason to hope that the institution will rise into a condition of prosperity and reputation. And, while I deeply lament the necessity of the exposition promised in the foregoing communication, it is truly consoling to my bosom, that the object for which I have so incessantly labored the last ten years is likely to be accomplished."

In writing to elder A. M. Poindexter on the same subject, he says, "It is all-important to bestir ourselves, and carry forward the college to a condition of respectability and useful action. My conviction of the feasibility and importance of this, remains the same. It is a duty which the Baptists owe to themselves, to the other denominations, to the community at large, to the city of Washington, to the government of our country, to this nation, to the world, and, especially, to the cause of the Lord

Jesus Christ. Take hold with me, my dear brother; we shall soon get others to help also; and, with the blessing, something can be done!"

At another time he thus writes: "The Lord's arm is not shortened, that it cannot save. Who can tell how soon he may send prosperity, and a rich and extensive blessing. My hope of ultimate complete success is not broken; and if I have sometimes seemed to hope against hope, you will recollect it is not the first instance of the kind that has ever occurred. *Our God can do every thing!*"

CHAPTER XI.

REFERENCE TO MR. RICE'S TRIALS—SYMPATHY NEEDED—HIS FRIENDS NUMEROUS—THE PREJUDICES OF MANY SOFTENED—AMICABLE RELATIONS WITH OTHERS RESTORED—INTERESTING LETTER TO MR. JUDSON—CONCERN FOR REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA—CONDITION OF BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THAT REGION—LETTERS—DESIRE TO SETTLE IN WASHINGTON—THIS WISH NOT REALIZED—REFLECTIONS—MR. RICE'S HEALTH BECOMES SERIOUSLY IMPAIRED—CAUSES—REFERENCE TO SEVERE ILLNESS.

It has already been intimated that the subject of this memoir was compelled, at one period, to struggle against a swelling tide of opposition from various sources. In addition to the embarrassments of the college, which were by some attributed to his mismanagement, he became personally involved in debt; and, being unable to comply with his engagements, unpleasant feelings were, on this account, entertained towards him. What served also to increase opposition, was the fact, that, as the treasurer and principal manager, he had personally much to do in making contracts, and bearing pecuniary responsibility, on behalf of the college. Funds not being realized according to expectation, he was unprepared to meet the claims of creditors, and

upon him fell the whole weight of exasperated feeling created by such a disappointment. At this juncture, though in common with many others he might have been injudicious in thus hastily forming contracts, he was much in need of the sympathy and aid of his brethren. An almost crushing load of cares oppressed his mind, while every nerve was strained to collect the requisite funds to satisfy the creditors, and save the institution from ruin. Perhaps few were able fully to enter into all the peculiarities of his situation, while too many were inclined unduly to censure him. It should be stated, however, that he found many friends, especially at the south, who were unwilling to abandon him. As much the greater part of his time had been spent among them, they had been witnesses of his disinterestedness, his suffering, and toil. They continued, through him, to contribute to the college, and by their personal kindness did much to soothe his lacerated mind. There never was a time when at their dwellings, or at the house of God, he did not receive a cordial welcome.

It is pleasing to be able to state, that after the excitement occasioned by the embarrassments of the college had passed away, a more friendly state of feeling began to exist between Mr. Rice and those with whom there had been personal misunderstanding. Those also who had regarded his course with marked censure, again viewed him in a more favorable light. In the exercise of that

humility so peculiarly the result of christian principle, he addressed letters to several brethren, acknowledging those particulars in which he felt himself to have been defective, and desiring that the same friendly relations which had previously existed, might be restored. Those communications, with their replies, evince the triumph of holy feeling over the selfishness of depraved human nature. A letter referring to this subject, addressed to his far distant and much loved brother Judson, will bring before the reader this whole subject. Some of the allusions are truly touching; indeed, the whole epistle seems to have been the effusions of a heart overflowing with tenderness and christian love.

College Hill, D. C.

"Very dear Brother:—I date 'College Hill, D. C.' because my papers are in a room of the Columbian College, at that place; and *that*, although I have no right of property there, is the only spot having any thing of the nature of *home* on earth—except, indeed, the affectionate kindness of many brethren and their families, where I am in the habit of calling, in different and distant parts of the country. These *homes* as I frequently call them, are exceedingly dear to me. None but a pilgrim, literally '*sine domo*,' as one of my brethren addressed me in a letter, can realize how sweetly precious they are.

"One of these, where I frequently find rest and comfort, as did the prophet by the kindness of the good woman, who had a chamber built for him upon the *top* of her house, is the home of brother Wm. H. Turpin, at Augusta, Ga. which place is, as I sometimes say, my southern head-quarters for the winter; and whose name has probably become somewhat familiar to you through brother Simons, brother and sister Wade, and by other sources. Another is, that of elder Jesse Mercer, Washington, Ga. Another, Archibald Thomas, Richmond, Va. and I might mention many more. I am now at Powelton, Ga. although my letter is headed College Hill, D. C. at the house of Dr. Cullen Battle. He is a precious brother, and his wife a precious sister, wealthy, and very liberal—and this also, is one of *my homes*.

"I am on my way to Alabama, notwithstanding the lateness of the season; but hope, if it shall please the Lord to prosper my way, to be in Virginia again early in August. My health, which has been a good deal shaken and imperfect for somewhat more than two years past, appears to be returning towards its former soundness and strength, for which, I desire to glorify God.

"You are aware my dear brother, that some years ago, things occurred between myself and brother Stow, that were exceedingly, and of a nature highly culpable and injurious. A perfectly cordial and happy reconciliation has taken place

between us. This is, I believe, *the Lord's doing*, for which, I desire exceedingly, to glorify his name. I wrote him last winter from this quarter, acknowledging my own wrong, and asking his forgiveness. O! that is a sweet passage in the book of God: '*Forgive and ye shall be forgiven.*' And that is a blessed precept: '*Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.*' In reply to my letter, brother Stow wrote me immediately, under date, 'Boston, 27th February, 1835,' among other things, saying: "I wrote you seven years ago, under the influence of feelings and convictions, such as seem to have dictated yours. I deeply felt at the time, and have so felt ever since, that in the unpleasant differences which occurred between us, I had unnecessarily injured you, and I then felt, and still feel, that I ought to acknowledge the wrong, and solicit forgiveness. I freely forgive you, my dear brother, and feel as cordial towards you as at any period since our first acquaintance. I shall be happy again to meet you, and to say many things that I cannot write. I feel under obligations to you for many acts of kindness; I should be glad to have it in my power to reciprocate them.' The letter 'seven years ago,' never reached me.

"Brother Knowles, for whom I have ever entertained a sincere and high regard, to whom I wrote about the same time, touching various topics, beside a reference to some unpleasantness and faulti-

ness of mine in past days, under date, 'Newton Centre, February, 16th, 1835,' wrote: 'I received and read with great pleasure your letter. I hasten to reply. It has, indeed, often been my intention to write to you, but the pressure of many cares, and the uncertainty for the greater part of the time, that a letter would reach you, have hitherto prevented me. You may be assured, that my feelings towards you have always been of the most cordial good will. Whatever I may have thought or said at moments of excitement, respecting your official conduct, I have never ceased to regard you with sincere respect for your talents, with gratitude for your public services, and for your personal kindness to me, and with affection for your many virtues. I have often taken occasion to defend you. I have maintained your integrity, your disinterestedness, and the sincerity of your aims. I have desired, and predicted that you would one day fully reinstate yourself in the confidence and affections of your brethren. I have contended, that if there has been wrong, the blame does not belong to you alone, but must be shared, in a large measure, by others.'

"After noticing some things in which his view of the course it was expedient for me to pursue, had been different from mine, he adds: 'I mention these things, my dear brother, not to censure you because you have thought proper to act otherwise. Yours may have been the wiser course. God has

certainly prospered you. I honor you for the perseverance you have shown, and I mourn that so much of your valuable life has been spent in rescuing the college. I grieve that your constitution seems to be giving way. I do earnestly pray that God will preserve your life, and enable you to complete your plans on behalf of the college. I rejoice that the institution is in a more prosperous state. I have never relinquished the belief that God would make it useful. My estimate of its importance, has of late, been immeasurably increased.

'And now, my dear brother, you perceive how unnecessary it was to ask my forgiveness. I *never* felt myself injured, and there never has been a time when I could not most cordially take you by the hand. Yet, at moments of excitement, I may have done or said something to injure your feelings. If so, I am sincerely sorry, and ask your forgiveness. May our gracious Saviour forgive us all, and make us henceforward, more fit to serve him."

"Brother Chase, truly a brother beloved—date, 'Newton Theological Institution, February 22d, 1835,' also says: 'The reference which you make to the period of my residence on College Hill, and the sentiments which you express, have awakened emotions which I shall not attempt to describe. Rest assured, my dear brother, that not a particle of hardness towards you is cherished in my bosom. I have remembered you with fraternal feeling in my prayers, and have thus found a sweet relief,

amidst the pangs occasioned by the change in our relations. O how strong the motives derived from the cross of Christ, and the high and holy duties to which we are called, and the hope of heaven, to love one another, and to forgive as we hope to be forgiven! God grant that during the remnant of our sojourn on earth, we may 'keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.'"

"What I had to confess was chiefly, and I knew not how to express it more fully, *pride and naughtiness of spirit.* I made no complaint against any. I desired a state of relations such as these extracts indicate now the existence of; and while I would continually humble myself before God, desire exceedingly to glorify him for these tokens of his favor. I thought it might be some consolation to you, my very dear brother, to see these indications.

Most affectionately yours,

LUTHER RICE."

Among other objects which engaged the attention of Mr. Rice, it should be recorded, that towards the close of his life, he entertained a very deep concern for a revival of religion among the Baptists of the city of Washington, and its vicinity. In the northern part of Virginia, with the District of Columbia and the State of Maryland, the churches of our denomination have, within the last quarter of a century, undergone a most melancholy change. The spirit of Antinomianism, with all its blighting influence, has been at work. It is true, there have

been exceptions; but with respect to the larger portions, the facts are too apparent to be denied.

The ministry are justly to be charged with a great part of the blame, in the existence of this unhappy state of things. Possessing but few scriptural qualifications of good ministers of Jesus Christ, the tendency of their labors could be no other than pernicious. Deprived of her lovely symmetry, and attired in a garb unsuited to her native dignity, truth was left to weep over the disgrace and shame in which she had been involved, by these her professed friends. A few doctrines unconnected with their legitimate practical uses, and with numerous distortions, constituted mostly the theme of their discourses, and were urged in a spirit utterly at war with the genius of christianity.

It is not strange, that beneath influences like these, blasting and mildew should rest on this portion of the garden of the Lord. The pleasant fruits of righteousness were but rarely to be seen, for churches gradually diminished in numbers and influence. Their system of doctrinal sentiment precluded the duty of calling on men to repent. They began to feel but little concern for the extrication of sinners from Satan's bondage, and, as a necessary consequence, but feeble efforts were made, and few sinners converted. It had been, from the origination of the college, an object of high importance with Mr. Rice, to effect a change in the spiritual condition of these churches. He believed

that the institution, if brought into prosperous operation, would shed around a holy influence, which might be felt in all the circumjacent region. To this, as one of the strongest wishes of his heart, he frequently referred, in mingling with his brethren, and in his letters to different individuals. Writing to elder A. M. Poindexter, he remarks:

"In very intimate connection with the college concern, I am exceedingly anxious to see something done touching the building up of the Baptist interest in Washington and Georgetown. This appears quite indispensable to the welfare and beneficial influence of the college. My mind is much on this subject, and particularly with reference to the idea of attempting something there myself. Touching this matter, too, I want your aid. I want, distinctly, your help in relation to the raising of the Baptist interest in the City, Georgetown, and the region roundabout connected with, and consequent upon, your agency for the benefit of the college. Your aid, with the blessing of God, may be of great and signal importance and value to the Baptist cause there! My dear brother, do let us TRY what can be done at Washington, in point of religion. Who can tell, if, peradventure, the Lord will approve the effort, and add his effectual blessing! 'Beginning at Jerusalem.' I do think we ought to strive to build up the cause at Washington."

At another time he says, "Should it please the Lord to bless the effort to build up the cause of reli-

gion—a Baptist church or two at Washington—probably I may be able to do more for the college itself in a short time, in that connection, than in my present sphere of labor. I mentioned this matter in a letter to a friend of mine at Washington, who seems at once all alive with the idea. I know not what may be in the future of Divine Providence, but wish simply to move on in the line of duty. Blessed be God for that promise: 'In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths.'

"My dear brother, I beseech you take hold with us. Let us see what, with the blessing of God *we can* do for Washington and the college, cast in thy lot with us. First of all, labor a year or two in collecting funds, getting subscriptions, &c. Endeavour at least to obtain one professorship or more. And, then, if Providence favor the plan, as might probably be the case, settle there. Labor enough for your powers will be needed there. And talents, such as heaven has bestowed on you, ought to be employed at the more important points—'*beginning*' said the precious Redeemer, '*at Jerusalem*.' I do think it the duty of the Baptists, and of some particular ones personally, to take hold of the business at Washington; *as if they meant to do it!*"

These extracts more than intimate his expectation of an ultimate settlement at some point contiguous to the college, with the design of attempting to assist in the elevation of the Baptist cause there. Having pursued a migratory life for so

many years, he began to feel exceedingly desirous to employ his entire time in study and pastoral labor. Connected with this determination, at one period there was some probability that he might enter into the matrimonial connection. Relating to his permanent location in Washington, he thus writes to a friend:

"I feel anxious for the cause of religion in Washington and Georgetown; and am thinking whether it may not be my duty now, that the college matters are approaching a condition that may allow of my locating, to attempt something in Washington and Georgetown. Should it come to this, your exertions may be of much importance in the case. I do not wish this idea to be talked about; but I wish you to pray to God to direct me in reference to it, and to lead me in the way that he will indeed approve and bless. I do greatly long to see the Baptist cause advance in Washington; and to see a Baptist church established at Georgetown. Such a result would be of signal advantage to the college.

"Last night I was looking over the tenth annual report of the American Tract Society. It is a highly interesting publication. It suggests so many ways of personal exertion in doing good, that I feel as if I had been very criminally negligent all my life—O that I might now *'repent and do the first work.'* O that I may indeed *walk circumspectly redeeming the time because the days are evil.*

"The state of things amongst the Baptists in North Carolina, particularly in regard to the education of ministers, and all the evangelical operations of the present period, is rapidly improving. The Baptist community in this state is undergoing a very happy regeneration. This took its rise from the influence of the Columbian College. The benefits of this community alone from that institution are a sufficient remuneration for that whole concern; but still greater and more extensive benefits will, I trust, yet spring from the same source."

As the sequel will show, the all-wise Disposer of events did not allow his servant to realize the long cherished wishes of his soul. By unremitted toil his whole life had been distinguished, and when there seemed some probability that he would be able to retire from the agency, and in more quiet, but not less useful labors, to devote his talents to God, he was summoned to give an account of his stewardship. Thus, Moses, the leader and lawgiver of Israel, was not permitted to enjoy the object for which through a long series of years, he had employed his undivided energies. Having brought his brethren to the borders of the promised land, from Pisgah's top he surveyed its flowing brooks, its fruitful hills and vales—and died. But in all the arrangements of Jehovah, even though the expectations of men may be frustrated, he is actuated by the most perfect wisdom and benevolence. It be-

comes us in all things submissively to bow to his adorable will.

During a few of the last years of his life, Mr. Rice was frequently the subject of painful disease. None can question that the almost unexampled toils, incident to the mission and college agencies, contributed to a premature prostration of his physical powers. During several years, his habits were exceedingly and in some respects necessarily irregular. In endeavoring to rouse the denomination to sympathize in the woes of a guilty world, he felt that a great work was committed to his hands. To the utmost of his strength he resolved to fulfil this high trust. Appalled by no surmountable difficulties, and conferring not with flesh and blood, he effected from week to week what would to most men have seemed altogether impracticable. Truly may it be said, that whatever his hand found to do, *he did it with all his might.* He would sometimes pleasantly speak of *stepping over* from Virginia, to South Carolina, or Alabama.

Sufficient allusion has already been made in another part of this memoir to the repeated and long journeys he felt himself compelled to make, that he might reach important meetings of the denomination in different states. In these journeys, he was subject to hunger and cold, to sleepless nights, and perpetual weariness, often amounting to prostration.

Beside this unremitted exertion, it will be remembered that during his residence in India, he suffered

with almost continual affections of the liver. From the shock his constitution then received, as Mr. Judson in one of his letters observes, he never fully recovered. This disease in consequence of frequent exposures and uninterrupted labor began to assail him with renewed violence. In many instances, a characteristic energy of mind prevented him from yielding to the claims of duty, which would have led him to intermit his toils, and submit himself to necessary medical treatment. When scarcely able to leave his room, he would sometimes preach two or three times, spend the night restlessly and in pain, and the next day be engaged as usual in some active employment. By degrees he found his health sinking, and for eighteen months before his death, seldom was entirely well.

In the following extract of a letter to elder A. M. Poindexter, he refers to the state of his health in the beginning of 1835. "From the Halifax camp-meeting I proceeded to Caswell court-house, where I preached. I spent the following Sabbath in Raleigh; preached Monday night following, at the Wake Forest Institute, and proceeded on to Bertie county, to be at the meeting of the North Carolina Baptist Convention. I was exceedingly glad to find our dear brother Carter, not only still among the living, but able to be about. On the Sabbath, I preached to a large assembly. *I have not been able to preach since*, except once. Six precious Sabbaths have passed in succession, without my being able to

preach. Some part of the time, I have not been well enough even to lead in family worship.

"Two days after leaving Bertie, an attack commenced upon me, with strong symptoms of bilious fever. I did not lie by, but kept along, though in much pain and illness a part of the way, till I reached brother McAllister's, just by Fayetteville, Friday night, where I remained till the Monday following, when I thought myself pretty fully recovered, and began to move. I had an appointment to preach in Darlington District, South Carolina, the Sabbath following, which I was just able to reach and to fulfil. Middle of that week, another attack commenced, very similar at first to the one I have just adverted to, but much more severe.

"I have not seen a well day since. Still I kept along; resting only on the Sabbaths, though for a considerable part of the time in very great pain—pain in my back, by reason of fever and illness. I passed here the 13th ult. and received your letter, with several others; then getting a little better day after day, slowly, and went on to the state convention at Barnwell, S. C. Attended some business in the range, and returned here, Monday, the 22d ult. not quite so well, by reason of a recent cold. After supper, commenced writing a letter; was attacked with severe pain in the region of the liver—compelled to desist—to take bed—to call for a physician, blister, and take a dose of forty grains of calomel, and keep my bed all the rest of the week.

I am now up; begin to feel tolerably well; am able to write, and hope by to-morrow, to begin to go out. Thanks to the Lord for his preserving and restoring mercy! I regard it with thankfulness, as a particular favor in Providence, that I was able just to reach this place before being absolutely compelled to seek medical aid; and another particular providential favor, that the confinement within doors, happened at a period when for more than one week of the time, the weather has been so coarse, I could have gone out but little if I had been well.

"I have been writing letters for two days past, that should have been written weeks sooner, had it been in my power. This is the first I have written this year."

CHAPTER XII.

MANIFEST IMPROVEMENT IN SPIRITUALITY OF MIND—HABIT OF JESTING AMENDED—INTERESTING LETTERS—QUOTATION FROM DIARY—DEVOTION TO GOD INCREASES—ILLNESS—DEATH—INTERESTING PARTICULARS OF HIS LAST HOURS, IN A LETTER FROM REV. JAMES E. WELCH—SENSATIONS PRODUCED BY HIS DEATH IN THE UNITED STATES—FUNERAL DISCOURSES—TESTIMONIALS OF ESTEEM—MONUMENT FURNISHED BY SOUTH CAROLINA CONVENTION—INSCRIPTION.

It is gratifying to refer to the increasing spirituality of mind, which was manifest for many months previous to his dismissal from the world. This was observed by all his friends. The Lord seemed to be preparing him for the holy employments of heaven, by the bestowment of an unusual measure of the spirit's influence. A deeper and more humbling sense of the divine purity, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, took possession of his soul, while he panted for entire conformity to the Redeemer's image. In a letter written in January, 1835, he adverts to a habit of foolish jesting to which he had yielded, and the retrospect of which, was the occasion of unaffected grief. This indulgence, so baneful to peace and usefulness, has been too much allowed by the professed followers of Christ, and

even by those who preach the gospel. To be cheerful and happy is their privilege, but to indulge in levity, is utterly beneath the true dignity of their character. In the extract which will here be inserted, the reader will learn the feeling with which Mr. Rice contemplated his own conduct in this respect, and the determination he formed to abandon it. He thus writes to a beloved christian friend:

AUGUSTA, GA. *January* 1, 1835.

"VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I wish us both a happy new year! Indeed, I do hope this year may be much happier than any preceding one has ever been in holy living, heavenly-mindedness and usefulness.

"Your excellent letter of the 13th of November, I found here the 13th of December, and should have answered it sooner had it been in my power. You cannot have possessed a more anxious desire for communication with me, since we were last together, and nothing could have been more truly acceptable or welcome than your kind letter.

"A circumstance has occurred which will, I trust, prove beneficial and effectual in correcting the habit of lightness, pleasantries, *foolish talking and jesting*, in which I have so long and so shamefully indulged. I was somewhat sensible of my infirmity in this particular, but by no means duly awake to the real criminality and folly of the habit that had become so deeply rooted! I often thought of reforming,

and occasionally made inefficient and ineffectual attempts to do so. The kind and discreet suggestions of a dear friend, brought my mind, I trust, to look at the matter in its true light; and I formed the same day, the solemn resolution to correct the habit thoroughly, and to abandon it absolutely and forever! That no more frivolous and improper pleasantries—that no more *foolish talking and jesting* should ever be permitted to pass my lips. I believe I have pretty well kept my purpose, and now solemnly renew it as I write this.

"These are the circumstances, and such the cause, I doubt not, that gave a beneficial turn to my deportment at the camp-meeting, and I trust ever since. I stated the matter pretty fully to brother H. at the camp-meeting, and likely enough, he has repeated it all in substance to you."

Three or four extracts from other letters, evincing the growing anxiety he felt to honor Christ, will be here inserted. To Mr. Judson, he says: "I have been lately meditating more and more on *keeping the heart with all diligence*. I am, I trust, more and more impressed, sweetly too, with the idea of *living for heaven*. O! that day by day, I could bring more and more of heavenliness into my heart and life. Certain it is, this is the only way to have true peace and real satisfaction, while passing through this *evil world*—this vale of tears. But in the possession of this holy, humble, heavenly state of mind, there is something exceedingly desi-

rable, and well worth living for. O! that my soul may ever be athirst for God, for *the living God.* Brother Taylor, of Richmond, will forward the file of the Religious Herald.

"And now, my ever dear brother, may the living God be your portion, your everlasting all. May the best of *heaven's* blessings rest on you and your dear, good wife—and may you see, even before the termination of the few years of your labors yet on earth, Burmah far more advanced in religious knowledge and in righteousness, than your beloved and highly favored native country is at the present period! My best regards to sister Judson.

Ever most affectionately yours,

LUTHER RICE."

In the close of a communication to elder A. M. Poindexter, he observes: "My soul has been more than is usual for me, alive in religion—in prayer, and in religious conversation. I have been sadly negligent in *religious conversation*, both as regards saints and sinners in years past. O! to be *a good minister of Jesus Christ!* to have the *speech always with grace, seasoned with salt! to watch for souls as one that must give account!* All this is no light thing! no small attainment! Would to heaven that myself and all ministers were such! What a difference would soon appear in the churches and in the world at large!

"Pray for me. I do endeavor to pray for you. Pray for the Columbian College; and the Baptist

cause in Washington." To a friend in Washington, he thus writes: "I am more and more sensible, I trust, of the importance of making progress in personal heart religion, and of striving earnestly to gain higher attainments in holiness. This is essential both to usefulness and comfort. I am more and more sensible, I trust, what a poor, guilty, sinful life mine has been. Some amendment, I do hope, has been, by the grace of the Lord Jesus, accomplished within fifteen months past; particularly within the last four months. That incessant and injurious levity, foolish talking and jesting, in which I so long and so criminally indulged, has been, I hope, by the special mercy of the Lord, somewhat effectually done away. I have enjoyed of late, more a spirit of prayer, and been more attentive to religious conversation as I meet with persons, and in families, than formerly. I make it a point to pray for the families where I tarry over night, or call during the day, and for the individuals I meet as I pass along.

"I have adopted it as a rule, to observe, as generally as circumstances will permit, seasons of prayer *seven times a day*. At midnight and at daybreak, private; before breakfast, with the family; at twelve o'clock, and at evening twilight, private; after supper, with the family; just before going to bed, private. Also observe the first and third Mondays in each month as days of fasting, humiliation, and prayer; the second and fourth, as days of thanks-

giving and praise. The monthly concert of prayer for missions, the evening of the first Monday in every month; the concert of prayer for Sabbath schools, the evening of the second Monday in every month; and I have concluded to appropriate a season in the evening of the third Monday in every month, for special prayer for the Columbian College, and for a revival of religion in Washington especially, and in the other cities in the District, and in the country roundabout."

In another letter he thus describes his feelings: "Faint, yet pursuing, I am striving, though but too feebly, to gain a constantly realizing apprehension of the divine presence and glory. *To glorify God and enjoy him*, is verily the chief good. I thank you for the strain in which you have written. It is of use for the servants of the Lord to suggest thoughts and views of this nature to one another. O, for more holiness! for more real heart religion! for entire, absolute devotedness to the cause and glory of the blessed Redeemer!"

Connected with these extracts will be introduced a few quotations from his diary, beginning with the 1st of January, 1836. They give pleasing evidence of the spiritual-mindedness for which he became more and more remarkable.

"1836, *January 1st.*—My plan is to read the Bible through, systematically, once a year: five chapters a Sabbath, and three each day in the week besides, goes through the Bible in a year. My sea-

sons of prayer are seven in the twenty-four hours: at daybreak, mid-day, evening twilight, bed-time, between bed-time and daybreak, *private;* before breakfast and after supper, *in the family.* Make it a point to pray for every family, where I tarry a night, or call in the day; for every person, individually, who makes a donation for any object for which I receive funds; for every one I converse with in the day; for every person I see during the day; all as particularly as practicable. I think this course tends to keep alive religion in the soul; to prevent lightness and other improprieties; to secure success to my efforts.

"The Lord, in his mercy, has brought me to the beginning of another year. I think I have made some little progress in religion the past year, but far less than I ought. God grant I may do better, should life be preserved through this year also. I think it right to plan, act, and labor, as if I might have thirty years for service yet before me; for even in that period, I should not have reached the age of my ancestors: but also *so* to live, plan, act, and labor, *as though I might die soon, any day or hour.*

"26*th.*—Visited my old friend and brother, elder E. B. Glad to find him so much in the spirit of religion. Lament my want of spirituality.

"*Feb.* 11*th.*—Called on brother L. What a pity it is that a minister of the gospel should be extensively engaged in worldly business!

"28*th*.—Too unwell to attend meeting; did not preach! Had but little religious enjoyment: an interesting conversation with brother D.

"29*th*.—Better in health, but low in religion! Restore unto me, I beseech thee, O Lord, the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit!

"*March* 25*th*.—This day brings me to be fifty-three years old. How thankful should I be for all the mercies of the past! how humbled for my sins! O, for grace, that having entered on another year, I may renewedly devote all my time and powers to the service and glory of Christ.

"*April* 9*th*.—Much as usual. O, for more life, light, comfort, and action, in religion. The kindness of my friends calls for gratitude and praise to God.

"28*th*.—Much as usual this day in religion. When shall I see the light of divine things more clearly, and feel their power more effectually?

"*May* 23*d*.—Sister T., where I stayed last night, is sick and low, but is, I trust, one of the ransomed of the Lord! and O, how much better than health, or any earthly good, is true religion!

"27*th*.—The kindness of friends, in supplying me with clothing, awakens grateful emotions in my bosom. Staid with brother G. last night. The closeness of this brother, as to giving any thing to promote religious objects—old, wealthy, and saved, as he is—gives me pain. Am truly glad that the Baptist brethren at New York have formed the

'American and Foreign Bible Society,' to promote Baptist translations of the blessed Bible. Have resolved to raise thirty dollars for it, and become a life member.

"*June* 14*th*.—More ill to-day than yesterday; and have especially to lament the low state of religion in my soul! Some comfort with brother R. and brother C.

"15*th*.—Somewhat better; hope soon to be quite well. O, for spiritual health! Much kindness manifested by my friends in Richmond. O, for a heart full of gratitude and love!

"16*th*.—Eight days ago received a letter from brother Judson, Burmah, and one from brother Kincaid, Ava. How unworthy am I of such tokens of regard, from such of the servants of the Lord. It appears, by the letter of brother Kincaid, that my preaching was made instrumental in his becoming a missionary to Burmah. Instead of sending me back, a better one was sent. These letters awakened powerful emotions in my bosom. I could not, for some time, refrain from weeping. O! that I were better!

"20*th*.—Spent most of the day at brother C's; brother J. there, too. Profitable conversation.

"27*th*.—A peaceful day; calm, but not *filled* with holy delight, as I earnestly desire to be. Agreed with brother B. to observe a season in the evening of the fourth Monday in every month, in special prayer for colleges: began it last night. Sorry

there is not more religion, particularly among the Baptists in Washington. O! for a powerful revival in this place.

"*July* 12*th*.—Some sweet savor of divine things. Interesting conversation touching the scripture import of the kingdom of heaven. Church, &c. with brother B. and A. Attended prayer meeting; some little life and comfort. Tarried with brother A. Ought to have had more serious, affectionate, spiritual conversation.

"20*th*.—A pleasant day. Called on several interesting friends, brethren and sisters. O, that I could be more profitable to them! Conversed with brother B. who I fear is in error. Would I had more meekness, and *meekness of wisdom*, in conversing with such.

"25*th*.—Private fast day and prayer. Some earnestness for myself and for the Columbian College. Brother B. and brother L., with family, join with me in the concert for the college.

"*August* 11*th*.—Finished my letter to brother R. Brother N. agrees, as did brother E. W. R., to unite in the concert of prayer for seminaries of learning.

"13*th*.—Greeted with a hearty welcome at the camp-meeting at the Cross Roads, this evening. Some twenty or thirty, or more, came as by one impulse to the margin of the camp ground, to salute me.

"14*th*.—Preached at Cross Roads camp-meeting:

Acts, vi. 7—'And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.'

"22*d*.—Private fasting and prayer; some measure of engagedness. Concert of prayer for seminaries of learning, rulers, and capitols. Joined with brother M. and family in this concert.

"28*th*.—Preached at Elam, Darlington district, S. C., from Acts, viii. 35—'Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.' Solemn season.

"29*th*.—Private thanksgiving. O! that my poor heart could be truly alive in this kind of exercise, and that I could praise the Lord with joyful lips, as I ought."

The sentence just quoted was the last he wrote in his journal, being a little less than four weeks before his death. It expresses a sentiment which for many months seemed to have maintained constant possession of his soul. While God was his daily delight, he still panted for larger draughts of spiritual influence. Literally did he hunger and thirst after righteousness. Every indication of decline in faith, love, or zeal, was watched with most sedulous care, and beheld with unaffected grief. Indeed, we may judge from his diary, and conversation with his brethren, that the only thing which diminished his enjoyment, was the consciousness of not having attained a perfect measure of holiness.

In all his sermons, also, for some time before his decease, an unusual degree of the spirit of Christ was manifest. They were remarkable, not only for rich, evangelical sentiment, but for pathos and energy. Like a dying man he preached, and each time as if he never should preach again. Some of his discourses at the June anniversaries in Virginia, in 1836, will never be forgotten by many of his brethren. As upon the verge of heaven he stood, and beckoned his kindred in Christ to look up and prepare for its holy delights. Frequently was it said, that he had not before been heard with so much power to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

We now approach the affecting scene which closed the earthly labors of this good man. While on a journey to the south, he was arrested in South Carolina by sickness, and unexpectedly to all, was summoned to his reward. He does not himself seem to have been aware of the dangerous nature of his disease, until a short period before his death. Then, with nothing else to do but to die, he calmly directs his horse, sulkey, and baggage, to be sent to Washington, as the property of the Columbian College, and prepares to take his flight to that blissful world, for which he had become so eminently prepared. Some particulars of the closing scene have been furnished by the Rev. James E. Welch, and will be here inserted. They are contained in a letter addressed to the Rev. Mr. Meredith, of North Carolina.

At the Grave of Luther Rice,
Edgefield District, S. C. December 4, 1837.

"My dear Brother:—The mournful pleasure is mine of visiting the grave of one we both much respected and tenderly loved. He was to me as David to Jonathan; and while I sit upon the large, white marble slab, procured and sent here by the Baptist Convention of this state, to be placed over his grave, my reflections necessarily bring to my mind many of the scenes through which he passed while living. In imagination I saw him at Andover, *first* suggesting to a selected few of his fellow-students the idea of a mission abroad among the heathen—his departure from his native land—his arrival in Calcutta—his baptism with Judson and wife—their banishment from India—their landing at the Isle of France—his sailing for South America, and landing in the United States—his 'flying through' every part of the country like an angel, preaching the gospel and waking up the sleeping energies of the Baptists—his prime agency in the formation of the Baptist General Convention, &c. &c.; I could but exclaim, being alone: 'After all thy toils and wanderings and sorrows, my brother, among these long-leafed pines, thou hast found a resting-place, where thou shalt quietly sleep, undisturbed, until the morning of the resurrection.'

"I was also forcibly reminded of some of my last interviews with him in Virginia. After being repeatedly in his company, we attended together

the meeting of an association in the lower part of Halifax county, in August, 1835. After the close of the meeting, we called at a neighboring house for half an hour. No sooner were we all quietly seated than he commenced singing *alone*, with great fervor, the comforting hymn called the '*Star of Bethlehem*;' and after closing, he said: 'Let us pray;' nor shall I soon forget the unction with which he seemed to plead with God 'as o'er the mercy-seat.' I afterwards said to a brother, 'I do not believe brother Rice is long for this world,'—when with surprise, he asked 'why I thought so?' seeing his uncommon good health; to which I replied, 'I never have seen such an alteration in any man in my life; he is so devoted, devotional, and heavenly-minded, that I think he is ripening for heaven, and God will take him to himself.'

At Dr. R. G. Mays, *December* 5, 1837.

"I am now sitting in the very room where our dear brother Rice breathed his last; and how forcibly the words of the poet came home to my feelings:

'The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged above the common walks of virtuous life,
Quite on the verge of heaven.'

Being desirous of knowing myself, more particularly, all the circumstances connected with his sickness and death, I came here to make inquiry; and believing you and many others feel also a deep interest, I communicate such information as the

physician who attended him, and sister Mays, both of whom are now present, could recollect. Dr. Mays himself is absent on a visit to Charleston.

"Brother Rice was unwell the night he reached Columbia, S. C. but hoping he should get better, he took some palliating medicine, and continued his journey. But on Friday night, September 1st, he was quite ill, and fearing he should not be able to reach Augusta, Ga. he changed his course, and came up to brother Coleman's, on Saturday, and sent for Dr. J. C. Ready, a Baptist minister, and a physician, about noon, who gave him medicine. On visiting him again on Sabbath morning, he gave him more powerful medicine, and bled him freely. After the bleeding, he fainted, not so much from the quantity of blood taken, as from a nervous dread he always had of the lancet. Dr. Mays met him on Saturday, and invited him to his house; and on Sabbath morning, while sister Mays called to see him, he received the invitation, and in the afternoon he rode the two miles alone, in his sulkey, without much apparent fatigue. Frequent cupping seemed to mitigate the severe pain in his side, which a subsequent blister entirely removed. He remarked on Sabbath morning, that 'it was a matter of entire indifference to him where he should die, whenever the Lord chose to call him, he was ready to go.' His thirst was constant and not easily satisfied, and although his appetite remained pretty good,

he frequently remarked, that 'his taste was unnatural.'

"During the first week of his sickness, he gave a detailed account of the secret missionary society, formed by Judson, Mills, himself, and others, at Andover—that they would devote themselves personally to the work of carrying the gospel to the heathen in foreign lands; together with a history of the missionary toils, &c. with all that clearness and energy for which his mind was distinguished. He seemed also to rejoice that the Lord had raised up such a man as Kincaid to take his place in the mission field—a man, said he, 'so much better qualified than myself for the missionary work.' During the whole of his sickness, says sister Mays, 'she never heard even a groan'—that 'he bore his suffering with more lamb-like submission than she ever saw.' Every evening during his sickness he insisted that Dr. Mays should have family worship *in his room;* and whether the doctor or others prayed, he usually asked that they would pray 'if it be the will of God he might recover.' This request was always made with evident and calm submission to the will of God. He frequently asked those present to sing for him the encouraging hymn, beginning

'When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,'

With others of a similar import. On the Sabbath morning before he died, the last he ever spent on earth, he asked them to sing the hymn, beginning

'Another six days' work is done,
Another Sabbath is begun.'

When asked what the state of his mind was, he replied, 'I have a sweet and abiding hope in the mercy of God, but not that animating view of the Lord Jesus I desire to have.' During the whole of his confinement to his room, he rose early every morning—shaved himself and read his Bible—until the last three or four days before he died. Dr. Ready says, that his state of mind through his whole sickness seemed to be 'a firm faith, calm reliance on the promises of his Saviour,' 'perfect resignation to the will of God,' 'without the fear of death,' 'willing to go whenever called, but desirous to remain only to accomplish some benevolent objects he had in view.'

"On Thursday, September 23, at 3 o'clock, P. M. he had a chill, followed by fainting, which lasted ten minutes, and of all that passed he seemed afterwards entirely unconscious; but perceiving that some change had taken place in his clothing and bed, he asked 'what had happened to him?' and on being told, remained silent for some minutes, and then asked the doctor if he 'thought him dangerous?' The doctor replied that there were 'some symptoms in his case which he could not account for, and inquired whether he had any request to make in relation to his affairs;' when he replied, 'Send my sulkey, and horse, and baggage, to brother Brooks, with directions to send them to brother Sherwood, and say

that *they all belong to the college.*' Just twenty-four hours after, i. e. on Friday, at 3 o'clock, he had another similar paroxysm.

Early on Saturday night, he requested and gave special directions, that a messenger should be sent for brother Todd, (a Baptist minister, living near Cambridge, fifteen miles off,) so that he might arrive by 9 o'clock, on Sabbath morning. This induced the physician and others in attendance to think that he expected another paroxysm of fainting at 3 o'clock on Sunday, which he should not survive; and in all probability he wished to give some directions to brother Todd respecting the affairs of the college; but instead of the twenty-four hours as before, it returned in just half the time, and while lying calmly asleep on his right side, he expired, without any motion or agitation whatever.' Drs. Mays and Ready were in attendance the night he died. About half an hour before he expired, he asked the doctor what he thought of his case—said he felt pretty well, and upon the whole thought his symptoms more favorable. He then fell into a sweet sleep, and one of them felt his pulse, which was regular and soft, (he still asleep,) not more than a minute before, and on taking his chair, he immediately heard him breathe *quicker and fuller*, and returning quickly again to his side, found he breathed no more, and thinks he 'died without ever waking'—'that he did not feel death as other men generally do.'

"The doctor thinks the sudden issue was owing to the rupture of a large abscess in the liver. He was buried on Sabbath morning, at 10 o'clock, by the road-side, and near the Pine Pleasant Baptist church, which is five miles south of the Saluda river, and twelve miles below the Abbeville line.

As ever, yours sincerely,

JAMES E. WELCH."

As the tidings of this mournful event spread over the United States, there was awakened in the bosoms of many, the most unaffected sorrow; and all acknowledged that a great man had fallen in Israel. In the southern states he was tenderly loved, and wherever he was known, his talents had commanded respect and veneration. Among his brethren in the city of Richmond, was the emotion created by his death, especially felt. This, next to College Hill, had been considered his principal home. When his death was announced, a meeting of the churches was called, and among other resolutions expressive of warm christian regard, the Rev. J. B. Jeter was appointed to preach a discourse commemorative of this event. In accordance with this request, a crowded assembly, in the meeting-house of the First Baptist Church, was addressed from Matthew, xix. 29. "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

At the Columbian College a meeting of the faculty was called, when the following resolutions were adopted:

"*Resolved*, That we deeply feel and lament the death of so eminent a laborer in the cause of learning and religion.

"*Resolved*, That this institution has lost in the deceased, its most distinguished founder, and a friend who devoted to its interests, the fruit of years of unexampled labors.

"*Resolved*, That we will unite with the board of trustees, in expressing, by appropriate public exercises, our sense of his great worth and eminent services, and in taking measures to erect a suitable monument over his remains.

"*Resolved*, That institutions of learning are a powerful means of upholding truth, and advancing human improvement; that designed, as they are, to stand for centuries, they should not be deserted because shaken by the vicissitudes of a day; that the object for which this institution was founded, remains, in our estimation, in undiminished importance; that looking at what it has accomplished in the work of education, and to what, under the blessing of God, it can accomplish, its friends will find motives of a high character, for placing it on a broad and firm foundation.

WM. RUGGLES,
Secretary of the Faculty."

By the appointment of the Board, the president of the college, Rev. Stephen Chapin, D. D. preached a funeral sermon from 2 Samuel, vii. 9. "I have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are upon the earth." This discourse was afterwards published. The following extracts will not be unwelcome to the reader:

"There was something extraordinary in his life—extraordinary in reference to the day in which he lived, and to the objects which he aimed to accomplish. His spirit, his views, his aims, were all different from those of the christian world around him. For a while, he stood alone, having no kindred spirit to enter into his feelings and plans. Had he lived in the days of the apostles, when the whole primitive church was a missionary society, burning with zeal to obey the fresh and the ascending injunction of her Saviour in sending out her heralds to publish the gospel to all the surrounding nations, it would have been strange, had he not caught the missionary spirit, and joined with them in their labors. But we must remember, that at the time he came into public life, the American churches were profoundly slumbering over this command. Then no missionary had left this country for distant shores, and no foreign missions were thought of. How different that period from the present. Now the missionary spirit is burning with a bright and spreading flame, and missionary stations quite encircle the globe. How wonderful then, that Mr.

Rice and a few other young men, should, at such a time, conceive a foreign mission; consecrate themselves to its service, and then, in modesty, but fixedness of purpose, submit their views and their wishes to their fathers in the ministry. Indeed, there was something so remarkable in all this, that we cannot account for it, without admitting the special interposition of Providence. Yes, the time had come when our churches were to be roused up on this subject, and these young men were divinely moved to do it.

"His life was also elevated. It was not devoted to the pursuits of gain, or ambition, or pleasure. Nor did he intend to spend it in the discharge of the ordinary duties of religion. He early resolved that his influence should be felt in foreign lands, and in future ages. His views were enlarged, his benevolence expansive, his aims were high, and his object noble. His capacious mind and heart embraced the whole human family; and it was his purpose to aid in giving the gospel in its written and preached forms to the Gentile nations; and thus to spend his days in those labors best fitted to bring on the millennial rest of the world."

Among other testimonials of the high regard in which he was held in the United States, the fact may be mentioned, that all the periodicals of the denomination contained editorial and other allusions to his character and life. Many of these were highly commendatory. The following is from the

pen of Mr. William Sands, the editor of the Religious Herald:

"In his death we have to mourn not only the departure of a zealous, devoted and untiring servant of God, but an intimate and faithful friend. From its commencement he took a deep interest in the welfare of the Herald, and exerted himself greatly in extending its patronage, when many of those from whom we looked for aid, stood aloof. To a large number of our readers he was personally known, venerated, and beloved. They will with us sorrow for his departure. He looked on this city, as in a measure, his home. He took a deep interest in our various benevolent institutions. For many years, he has been present at our anniversaries, and aided us by his counsels, and incited us to increased efforts by his warm and pungent exhortations. We looked for his presence as that of an old and valued friend. There were few churches in Virginia below the Blue Ridge, which he had not visited in his repeated journeys through the state.

"The cause of missions in the Baptist denomination in this country, owes more of its prosperity to the indefatigable labors and unflinching zeal of Luther Rice, than to any other individual now living. By his efforts, on his return from India, he roused the slumbering energies of the denomination, and called them forth into action. He fanned the missionary flame until it burst forth into a steady

and vigorous blaze, which is now shedding a brilliant light on our benighted world. Though his early labors in this department of christian benevolence, may now be lightly esteemed by some from whom better things might be expected—the name of Luther Rice is consecrated in the affections of thousands, as the pioneer of the mission cause in our land.

"He was also an untiring friend to the cause of education. To his efforts in behalf of the Columbian College, he has undoubtedly fallen a victim. He had indulged the anticipations that it would be the source of the most beneficial results to the denomination. In these anticipations he was doomed to be disappointed. Yet his zeal in its behalf never faltered, amidst the greatest disappointments. May we not hope that this institution will yet be a blessing, and reflect lustre on the memory of its devoted founder.

"Elder Rice was an able minister of the New Testament. His pulpit services were every where highly esteemed, and thousands have been benefitted by his ministrations. We have heard him preach with a power, energy and pathos, rarely surpassed. On such occasions he had complete mastery over the feelings of his audience, and held them willing captives. But he was not always in so happy a frame, though on all occasions, he was instructing and interesting.

"Brother Rice had his blemishes. He has been charged by some with imprudence in the manage-

ment of the college concerns. We have no doubt he erred; but his faults, compared with his many virtues and devotion to the cause of his Saviour, sink into comparative insignificance. His removal is the greatest loss which our denomination could have sustained in the death of any one man in the country. No one has been more devoted to our interests, has defended our denominational views with more zeal, or has rendered us greater service. Posterity will revere his memory, in conjunction with that of Judson, as a public benefactor, and in the language of an elegant author, 'recorded honors shall yet gather thick around his tomb.' He was a burning and a shining light, and we rejoiced for a season in his light. As long as our denomination has existence, the memory of Luther Rice will be held in grateful remembrance."

From the columns of the Herald, the remarks inserted below, and written by Rev. William F. Broaddus, are extracted.

"When I saw in the Herald of the 28th ult., a notice of the departure of our dear brother, Luther Rice, my heart sunk within me, and I began to say to myself, (perhaps wickedly,) better for the cause of religion that scores of ordinary soldiers of the cross had been removed from the field of battle, than that this mighty man should have been taken away. The Lord forgive a poor, short-sighted worm for thus presuming, for a moment, to question the wisdom of his administration, however inscru-

table! But, O, brother Sands, where shall we go to find such a man as Luther Rice?

"I have often been associated with brother Rice at the anniversaries of our benevolent societies, and I could never see him on such occasions, without feeling as if I were in the presence of the apostle of American missions. His soul seemed peculiarly alive to the wants of a perishing world. In all that he said, however, with respect to the spread of the gospel, it was obvious that the all absorbing motives with him was the glory of the Redeemer. He loved the souls of men, and therefore sought their salvation; but it was mainly because he saw in the recovery of sinners, the exhibition of God's glory, that he so ardently longed for their salvation. O that this were the predominant motive with all who are giving either their personal exertions, or their gold and silver to the cause of missions. No christian could hear brother Rice speak upon the universal triumph of the cross, without having his soul fired with the desire of seeing the banner of Immanuel waving over all the nations of the earth.

"Brother Rice was not, properly speaking, a literary man, although he had received in early life an accomplished education. Incessantly travelling to preach the gospel and to encourage the disciples of Jesus in the good work of extending his kingdom, he had but little time to devote to literary pursuits. Still he kept pace with the improvements of the age; and there were few subjects of importance in

any degree connected with the present or eternal happiness of mankind, with which he was not most familiarly acquainted. His efforts in behalf of the Columbian College, together with his co-operation in every scheme proposing to advance the cause of education, especially among the christian ministry, furnish abundant testimony that he knew how to value education. His great wish, his earnest prayer for the American Baptists was, that they might have an enlightened, as well as pious ministry. It was probably his zeal for the Columbian College, that brought on the disease which carried him to an early grave. For many years, he had exposed himself to hardships almost incredible, in visiting almost every corner of the United States, collecting funds to relieve the college from its pecuniary embarrassments. How far his efforts have succeeded in laying the foundation for final relief to this interesting institution, I cannot say—but when I consider, that this college has, by his indefatigable labors, been kept alive, until it has furnished the American Baptists with such men as Wyer, and Adams, and Ryland, and Knowles, and Malcom, and others who are now standing among the most useful of our preachers, I cannot believe that it will now be permitted to sink.

"I have been thinking that He who sees the end from the beginning, may have removed brother Rice for the salvation of the college. We have been depending almost exclusively upon his exertions to

sustain this institution; consequently, more was expected from him than was in any one man's power to accomplish. Perhaps, now that he is taken away, hundreds will awake to the importance of bringing the college to the point of influence and usefulness originally anticipated for it, and will put forth greater exertions than ever in its behalf; and thus, while his life may be justly regarded as materially aiding the concern, his death may, under God, be the means of doing more for this noble enterprise, than his laborious life had ever done. God grant that this may be the case.

"Is there any one, brother Sands, who can write a biography of this interesting man? It would, perhaps, be a difficult undertaking; and unless he has left more materials than I suppose he has, it must be but imperfectly accomplished. But *half a biography* of such a man would be eagerly sought after throughout the United States. I hope it will be undertaken speedily by some competent hand. It is necessary, in order that the christian public may have those erroneous impressions corrected, which have been produced by the various misrepresentations made of his character; and moreover, such a work might do much good, by stirring up a more active spirit in the glorious cause in which he spent his most valuable life."

A short time after the above was published, another interesting reference to some of the distinguishing traits of his character, connected with

recollections of a last interview with him. This was written by the Rev. Joseph S. Baker.

"His devotion to the cause of missions, and to the cause of ministerial education, is well known, and has already been the subject of frequent animadversion. There was yet *another* object that lay near his heart, and was not forgotten, either in his conversations with his christian brethren, or in his prayers. This was *the revival of pure and undefiled religion within the District of Columbia,* particularly in the *city of Washington,* and still more particularly amongst the *officers of government.* He had travelled much, was an attentive observer of men and things, and, consequently, had not failed to observe the immense influence which the metropolis of our country, and particularly the officers of government, were exerting through the whole length and breadth of our land. His benevolent soul longed to see this influence exerted in favoring the advancement of God's glory, and the eternal salvation of his fellow-men. For this he prayed, and for this he labored to bring *others* to pray.

"I was with him from the 13th to the 16th of August, (but a little more than a month before his demise,) at a camp-meeting held at the Cross Roads, in Halifax. He was then on his way to the south. There was an unusual gravity in his deportment, both in public and in private. I do not remember, during that period, to have heard him engage in any conversation that was not, in some way or other,

connected with the cause of God. It was very evident that the three objects, to which I have above alluded, pressed with much weight upon his mind. He advocated, in public, the cause of God and a perishing world, as connected with the circulation of the Word of Life, fully and faithfully translated. In private, he proposed to several of us to unite with him, on the fourth Monday evening in each month, in concert of prayer, for revivals of religion in schools, academies, and colleges, and amongst the *officers of government.* There was an uncommon earnestness in the interrogatory, 'Will you?' with which he followed his propositions. It was also accompanied with a searching look, as though he would pry into the secret recesses of our souls, to see whether he could find a spirit there congenial with his own.

"I was constrained to leave the camp-ground on the morning of the 16th. I had been appointed to preach at eight or nine o'clock; brother Rice was to follow at eleven o'clock. On leaving the house, after preaching, to go to my house, I was followed by brother Rice. He had understood that there was a prospect of my leaving my present field of labor, and had followed me, for the purpose of endeavoring to prevail upon me to go to Washington. He represented that the church at the navy-yard was without a pastor; spoke feelingly, but affectionately, of the state of things in the church under the care of brother Brown; expressed an ardent desire that

they might be blessed with a revival of religion in the city; alluded to the number and the influence of the government; descanted upon the salutary influence which such a revival of religion would probably exert throughout the Union; and added much more, with the view of impressing upon me the importance of the situation. He seemed to feel for the citizens of Washington the yearnings which a fond and benevolent father experiences, when he sees a beloved son expending, in vain and foolish pursuits, the powers which, if properly directed, might render him a subject of praise, and a blessing to the age and community in which he lived. He felt for the individual interest of the community—and he felt the more, because of its intimate connection with the cause of Christ. May the Lord yet evince, by an outpouring of his spirit upon the citizens of Washington, and the officers of government, that the prayers of this devoted servant were not in vain.

"I have thought the above sketch, hasty and imperfect as it is, might possibly prove interesting to the friends of our deceased brother, as it is calculated to throw some faint light upon the operations of his mind, towards the close of his life. If you concur in this opinion, you may give it a place in your paper. Sweeter than the mellow rays of a setting sun, is the peaceful end of a faithful servant of God.

"Our brother is gone. We know that we shall see his face no more on earth—no more be greeted with his smiles—no more listen to the counsel and the affectionate admonitions which were wont to drop from his lip, like gentle dew from heaven. In the grave, to which he has been consigned, his remains must lie, until the sound of the last solemn trumpet shall break through the silence of the tomb, and bid the dead 'awake.' This reflection spreads a gloom upon the soul; but the melancholy thus produced is again relieved by the recollection of the virtues of the deceased, and by the fond hope that these virtues will not lie buried with him in the tomb, but, like the mantle of Elijah, will rest upon the head of some surviving Elisha; or, like the light of the sun, in his absence, will be reflected from thousands of those whom he has left behind, revolving in their several orbs.

"I must heartily concur, with those who have preceded me, in the expression of a hope that some competent person will undertake to write his biography, and that at an early period."

The Rev. Mr. Meredith, editor of the Biblical Recorder, makes the following very pathetic, yet appropriate allusion to Mr. Rice:

"It is a most gratifying fact, and one well known to his friends, that for several years past, the deceased has been rapidly maturing for a better world. Deeply affected by the vanity and uncertainty, and perhaps ingratitude, of the present state, his affec-

tions and his thoughts have been gradually drawn away and concentrated upon higher and holier objects. His style of preaching, his conversation, and all the habits and manners of his life, plainly indicated a state of mind having but little congeniality with the present world, and far advanced in fitness for the next."

The Rev. Mr. Mercer, of Georgia, thus refers to some traits of his character:

"Mr. Rice's self-denial was equal to his devotion to every good cause. Like his blessed master, he went about doing good. He looked over the world, and found it full of human miseries, and forthwith he labored with all his might for their removal. Thus laboring, not unfrequently, was he exposed to heat, to cold, and to the colder treatment of those whose good he sought to promote. For even Luther Rice had his enemies, may we not say his persecutors? With talents of the very first order, and an education that would have secured to him the smiles and the favors of those who are deservedly called wise and good, he travelled up and down in the earth for the benefit of others. Oft-times, clad in tattered garments, to a stranger he would appear to resemble more a poor beggar than a great and good man. So cold-hearted selfishness has often treated those, of whom the world has not been worthy. A few kindred souls, however, who knew how to appreciate his self-denying labors, frequent-

ly ministered to his necessities. The Lord will reward them in *that day!*

"Mr. Rice was a powerful preacher. His thoughts were often original, and most generally expressed with a pathos and energy, peculiarly his own. There are thousands in these United States, who will long recollect his fine appearance in the pulpit, and the valuable instructions they have received from his sermons.

"But he has gone the way of all the earth. Posterity will do him justice. His name will stand upon a bright page in the history of his denomination, as no doubt it does in the Lamb's book of life, in a better world than this. His labors here are done, but who can calculate their important bearings?"

At the June anniversaries held in Richmond, in 1837, the vacancy occasioned by Mr. Rice's removal was severely felt. So regular had been his attendance, and with so much freedom had he mingled in their deliberations, that he was considered, in a measure, identified with all the great denominational operations of the state. By long, intimate, and endeared intercourse with almost all the ministers, and many private brethren, a mutual attachment had been created, which, even the stroke of death could not destroy. The numerous delegation which met on the occasion referred to, remembered him with melancholy interest though they saw him not. Frequently were incidental allusions made to the bereaving Providence which had call-

ed him away, both in public and private. And whenever the name of Luther Rice was repeated, the solemn silence, and the tearful eye, gave evidence how much he was beloved. In what estimation he was regarded, may be judged from the following extract taken from the report of the Baptist General Association of Virginia:

"It would not be suitable to close this report without referring to an event which has been keenly felt by the Baptists of Virginia. Since the last annual meeting, the providence of God has called away our esteemed brother, Luther Rice, from the scene of his earthly labors. As the friend of an enlightened and pious ministry, it is known he occupied elevated ground. To promote this great object, he spent the best of his life. He was among the earliest and most devoted friends of our beloved seminary, although his labors were chiefly directed to the interests of another institution. The duties of his agency led him, indeed, into other states, but he always delighted to call Virginia, 'home.' Scarcely with any intermission, he annually attended our general meetings, and always interested himself and labored as one at home. And here, he always found a hearty welcome. We loved him for the truth's sake—we loved him for his work's sake. But he is gone. We shall see his face no more. That tongue, which at our last anniversary, plead with such overpowering eloquence on behalf of dying men, is now mute in death. His majestic

form rests quietly beneath a little mound of earth, but we have reason to believe his happy spirit has gone to commune with a Clopton, and Semple, and with his earliest coadjutor, the lamented Mrs. Judson. We cannot but venerate his memory, for with all his frailties, *he was a great and good man.*

"May the great Lord of the harvest raise up many such to labor in his vineyard."

It has been already stated, that the remains of our esteemed brother were entombed in the graveyard of the Pine Pleasant Church, Edgefield District, South Carolina. The Baptist convention of that state, at their annual meeting, in 1837, resolved to erect a simple, yet permanent monument to his memory. It is a large marble slab, laid on raised brick work, and surrounded by a brick wall. The inscription was prepared by the Rev. J. L. Brooks, and very appropriately delineates the character of him who sleeps beneath it; an exact copy will here be inserted.

BORN March 25th, A. D. 1783.

BENEATH THIS MARBLE
Are deposited the remains of

DIED Sept'r 25th, A. D. 1836.

ELDER LUTHER RICE,

A MINISTER OF CHRIST, OF THE BAPTIST DENOMINATION.

He was a native of Northboro', Massachusetts,

And departed this life in Edgefield District, S. C.

In the death of this distinguished servant of the Lord, "is a great man fallen in Israel."

THAN HE,

Perhaps no American has done more for the great Missionary Enterprise.
It is thought the first American Foreign Mission, on which he went to India, associated with Judson and others, originated with him.
And if the Burmans have cause of gratitude toward Judson, for a faithful version of God's Word; so they will thro' generations to come "arise up and call Rice, blessed;" for it was his eloquent appeals for the Heathen, on his return to America, which raised our Baptist churches to adopt the Burman Mission, and sustain Judson in his arduous toils.

No Baptist has done more for the cause of education.
He founded "The Columbian College in the District of Columbia," which he benevolently intended, by its central position, to diffuse knowledge, both literary and religious, through these United States.
And if, for want of deserved patronage, that unfortunate Institution, which was the special subject of his prayers and toils, for the last fifteen years of his life, fail to fulfil the high purpose of its founder; yet, the spirit of education, awakened by his labors, shall accomplish his noble aim.

LUTHER RICE,
With a portly person and commanding presence,
Combined a strong and brilliant intellect.
As a theologian he was orthodox;
A scholar, his education was liberal.
He was an eloquent and powerful preacher;
A self-denying and indefatigable philanthropist.
His frailties with his dust are entombed;
And, upon the walls of Zion, his virtues engraven.

By order of the Baptist Convention, for the state of South Carolina,
This Monument is erected
To His Memory.

The letters engraved upon this marble, but few comparatively, will trace. The solitary spot, where lies all that is mortal of the servant of God, will seldom be trodden by the foot of man. The house of worship which stood near the grave, has since the interment been consumed by fire, and will probably not be rebuilt.

Occasionally, some friend will turn aside to drop a tear over departed merit, while he reads the brief memorial which affection has inscribed. But a more enduring monument than this, has been reared. His works do follow him—not only to the world above as evidences of unfeigned piety, but they live in the recollections of thousands who were the witnesses of his zeal and love. Nor will the present generation alone think of and regard him. When the hand of time shall have marred the epitaph, now found upon the marble stone, he will still be known and honored.

CHAPTER XIII.

REFERENCE TO MR RICE'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE—DIGNITY OF MANNER—SELF POSSESSION—ANECDOTE—STYLE OF HIS SERMONS—THEIR ATTRACTIVENESS—DOCTRINAL CHARACTER—IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINAL DISCOURSES— METHOD OF READING THE BIBLE, AND SELECTING TEXTS—ADVANTAGE OF THIS SYSTEM—HIGHLY GIFTED IN PRAYER—QUALIFICATIONS FOR PASTORAL LABOR.

It will now be the duty of the biographer, to notice some particulars for which Mr. Rice was remarkable in his ministerial character and labors. As a preacher of righteousness, he has been rarely excelled. By nature he was endowed with many of the essential attributes of an effective speaker. His appearance was highly prepossessing. Above the ordinary height, with a robust and perfectly erect form, there was at once produced on the mind of the beholder a most favorable impression. None could fail to entertain respect, for it was demanded by a peculiar dignity of appearance and manner. Especially was this true, when he arose in the pulpit, with a full face, and comparatively small eyes, there was sometimes rather a dull and heavy cast of countenance, which immediately changed, when he became animated by speaking; his voice was clear and melodious. He had but little action, which however was appropriate, and graceful. He

was at all times, when he addressed an assembly, remarkable for self possession. Nothing seemed capable of discomposing his mind. Perhaps few speakers have been apparently less affected by external circumstances; whatever might be the character of the congregation, whether large or small, intelligent or ignorant, whether in the city, or country, he was always distinguished for the same dignity of manner and readiness of utterance.

Although the writer, for many years, was often privileged to hear him, but a single occasion is remembered, when he seemed to be disconcerted, and even then, by a happy use of the unpleasant circumstance, a most solemn impression was left upon the minds of all who heard him. At an associational meeting, when an immensely large assemblage were seated before him, under the full foliage of a beautiful grove, he was interrupted by a few young persons, whose frivolous behaviour was attracting the attention of almost all by whom they were immediately surrounded. His subject, on that day was the future and eternal punishment of the wicked, which he treated with unusual clearness and power. In the midst of some of his most searching appeals, he paused, and looking for a moment with unutterable tenderness upon the thoughtless group, he faithfully and affectionately warned them of their fearful danger, and with tears streaming down his cheeks, besought them to repent and turn to God.

The style of Mr. Rice's sermons was, in many respects, superior. A refined critical taste could perhaps have discovered, at times, a redundancy of words and phrases, but this was no more than might have been expected from discourses which were always extemporaneous, especially when it is known that the multiplicity of other duties allowed but little time for preparation. Rather may it be considered as remarkable, that with so little leisure—having been, from the period of leaving the seminary, wholly employed in other matters—there should have been so much freedom from defect. While he was almost wholly engrossed with perplexing cares, connected with the mission and the college, his liberal education and his great, comprehensive mind, enabled him with ease and clearness to discuss the various topics introduced in his discourses.

As has just been intimated, his pulpit efforts were highly attractive. The moment he began to speak, attention was roused, and uniformly the interest thus awakened was kept up throughout the services. The clearness of his conceptions, the accuracy and force of his language, and the solemn dignity of his manner, all contributed to render him one of the most interesting public speakers of our land. Occasionally, his eloquence was almost overpowering, particularly when he advocated the more sublime doctrines of our holy religion, Indeed, in the discussion of such topics, he may be regarded as having been most felicitous. There seems to have

been a coincidence between the operations of his own mind, and those truths which, in their very nature, are vast and grand. The terribleness of Jehovah's wrath, the severity of his justice, and the rectitude of all his decisions, were themes which gave ample scope to his vigorous intellect, and in the discussion of which he was not only instructive, but exceedingly impressive.

This leads to the remark that his sermons were characteristically doctrinal. He was never more happy than when illustrating, or defending, some one of the divine attributes, and especially the sovereignty of God. The necessity and power of the spirit's operation, with the Deity and efficacious atonement of Jesus Christ, were also topics upon which he frequently dwelt. He often seemed at a loss for words adequately to express his lively apprehension of the doctrine of human depravity. Man was contemplated as involved in fearful and utter ruin, and justly exposed to the malediction of God's holy law. These, and kindred doctrines, constituted the chief burden of his discourses. Nothing could deter him from holding up the truth, and commending it to the attention of his hearers. In this respect he was remarkable. The fear of man, which bringeth a snare, he knew not; nor could flattery and applause induce him to compromise the word of God.

"Well do I remember," said an intelligent brother, "the impressions made upon my mind the first time

I ever heard him preach. I could not refrain from remarking subsequently, to several brethren, that he seemed to keep the glory of God more distinctly in view, in his preaching, than any individual I had ever before heard. This was his great, his peculiar characteristic—*a thirsting for the advancement of the glory of God.* 'Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,' seemed to be the constant and the fervent aspiration of his heart."

It was by some thought that his preaching was too doctrinal; that his ministry might have been in a higher degree profitable, had he more frequently pressed the calls and commands of the gospel upon the consciences of men. While it is remembered that Mr. Rice did not neglect to enforce practical religion, it should also be borne in mind that every minister of Jesus Christ may be expected to have his own peculiar manner of doing good. The great Head of the church has wisely and benevolently ordained, that men of different talents and address shall be brought into his service. Some are set for the *defence* of the gospel. These, by their peculiar conformation of mind, or the circumstances by which they are surrounded, may be so intent to maintain the cardinal doctrines of revelation, that experimental and practical religion may sometimes seem to be neglected. Then there are those, less qualified, indeed, to stand upon the ramparts of truth, but who are eminently fitted to attend to

other equally important services in this great warfare. One has a talent for argumentation, another for warning, and a third for entreaty. Some are remarkable for the clearness and cogency of their thoughts and illustrations, and others for the overwhelming influence of persuasive eloquence.

With respect to the peculiarity in the discourses of Mr. Rice, to which we have referred, abundant evidence exists to convince all, that the Lord intended to make his ministry very effectual in the instruction and edification of the household of faith. His knowledge of the Scriptures being profound and accurate, he was well skilled in the elucidation of difficult passages, and in exhibiting the harmony of various doctrines of the gospel, one with another. With him, the ascertainment and inculcation of truth was an object of paramount importance. And who does not perceive, that this disposition to investigate and expound the doctrines of the Bible, was likely, in an eminent degree, to insure usefulness?

It is not enough to effect the translation of men from the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son. When, by the divine blessing, this has been effected, there is ground for holy joy, but much yet remains to be done. They are to be taught the way of God more perfectly, and, to perform this work, the instructor will have need, himself, to understand thoroughly the lively oracles. It will not be enough, simply to enforce the precepts

of the gospel: the truth, in its spirit and tendency, must be unfolded and enforced, that believers may be built up and established in their most holy faith. It was a source of unutterable joy, in the decline of life, to the apostle John, "that the truth dwelt in his children, and that they walked in the truth." And in every age the church had been pure and efficient, in proportion as scriptural principles have constituted a prominent part of the instructions of the pastor or teacher. We need among our churches a greater number of workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Such was Luther Rice.

Elder William F. Broaddus, in adverting to this subject, remarks:

"As a minister of the gospel, I doubt whether brother Rice had an equal in all these United States. I have had the privilege of listening to the pulpit exhibitions of many to whom common fame had awarded a place in the very first rank of preachers, and I am free to confess, that I have never heard so *complete a gospel* from the lips of any man, as I have heard from him. I do not mean to say, that he excelled in what are generally considered as indispensable to an accomplished pulpit orator; such as gesticulation, rhetorical precision, &c. He was by no means deficient in these particulars; but it was in real strength, as an expounder of the Bible, as a teacher of the way of salvation to perishing sinners, that he excelled. His ordinary mode of

preaching was to go regularly through the writings of the evangelists and apostles; reading a whole chapter, and selecting a portion of it as a text from which to derive arguments for the great salvation. Redemption by the blood of Jesus, was the great theme of his sermons; while he never neglected to urge a holy life as the best evidence of the value and wholesome tendency of that influence, by which men are fitted for the heavenly glory. I have heard it said, that he sometimes failed in his attempts to preach. I have never witnessed one of his failures. Whenever I have heard him, he seemed to me to have a view of the subject under discussion, clear as the light of a noonday and cloudless sun—and I think I have never heard a sermon from him without receiving some light concerning the way of truth, which I had never enjoyed before."

The plan which for many years was pursued by Mr. Rice, in some respects, contributed to make him more familiar with the general scope and connection of the inspired writings. He not only read the Scriptures in regular order, but from each chapter in succession, obtained the subject of his discourse. Thus having preached from any one chapter, the next was immediately examined, and carefully studied; thus preparing himself for another opportunity of addressing the congregation.

Such a method of contemplating the word of God is fraught with the most beneficial results. Though it may not be expedient for every minister

in his public addresses to pursue the course just referred to, it is of transcendant importance that he study revealed truth in a regular connected manner, thus obtaining clear views of its import and design. So essential is such knowledge, that scholastic learning, or even an acquaintance with the best theological works, will not compensate for its absence. Literary acquisitions are not to be undervalued, but they are far less important than an intimate acquaintance with God's own book. The spiritual teacher may be able to amuse the multitude, and excite their applause by illustrations drawn from the whole circle of the sciences, and yet his ministrations rarely prove effectual to the conversion of a soul. The two-edged sword of the spirit can be so covered with the ornaments of rhetoric, as to render it but little effectual, and even useless. But he who understands its intrinsic excellence and power, and becomes skilled in wielding it, may expect, under God, to war a good warfare against the powers of darkness; "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of faith." It was this familiarity with scriptural truth, that constituted one of the prominent excellencies of Mr. Rice's ministry. During the period of his active toils for the mission and the college, he had leisure to read but little, excepting the Bible, and this he studied habitually, and with much care.

Our esteemed brother was exceedingly gifted in prayer. There was not only a richness in the

variety of objects named, and great simplicity of language, but a fervency and unction of soul seldom equalled. He seemed to draw very near the mercy seat, and to speak as one who was familiar with the employ. It has been often observed by the pious, that they have derived more spiritual profit from his prayers, than from many labored discourses. He scarcely ever prayed in public, without uttering the most humiliating confessions of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, while he gloried in the freeness and sovereignty of that grace, which is treasured in Christ Jesus, and which is made effectual unto salvation by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Among the topics which he never omitted to mention in his petitions, were the interests of missions and education. In connection with the latter subject, the Columbian College was usually mentioned by name.

The extensive journeys which for many years were performed by Mr. Rice, afforded numerous opportunities of addressing his fellow-men on the great themes of judgment and eternity. His congregations and the circumstances by which he was surrounded, were continually varying. This, doubtless, was one cause of that ease and readiness, for which he was so remarkable. He never seemed unprepared or unwilling to speak when called upon to do so, by the desire of his brethren. One of his best sermons on an anniversary occasion, was delivered with a previous notice of not more than half

an hour. The minister appointed to preach the introductory discourse having failed to attend, he was solicited to occupy the pulpit. Without hesitation or apology, he addressed a crowded audience, among which, was a large number of ministers from different parts of the country, in a most appropriate and impressive manner.

It can scarcely be expected that his discourses would be distinguished by a great degree of variety, either in sentiment or style. As already stated, they were always excellent, and sometimes superior; but his itinerant habits precluded the possibility of bestowing upon them that time and study, which he himself desired. His mind was perpetually absorbed by secular cares. The vexatious labor of providing funds, was his business from the time of his return to this country, nor did he find a respite, until he found it in the grave. A large portion of the time too, he was toiling to secure funds for an institution overwhelmed in debt.

That he would have made one of the first pulpit speakers of his day, had his attention been wholly directed to the ministry, none who knew him, can doubt. Had his divine Master allowed him to labor in some city congregation, where he might have commanded the time and facilities for patient investigation, there is reason to believe, he would have eminently distinguished himself by his varied and profound biblical knowledge.

The same may be said respecting the probable extent of his usefulness as a pastor. Many of the essentials of a good bishop were united in him. In a few instances, opportunity has been furnished to manifest the readiness with which he could adapt his observations to the peculiar circumstances of the circle into which he was brought. The writer in performing pastoral duty, was, on two or three occasions, accompanied by him. His remarks indicated not only an intimate knowledge of human nature, but peculiar skill in the application of scriptural truth. One of these seasons especially, will never be forgotten. Among other visits, the lowly dwelling of a poor, but pious widow, was entered. While every thing around betokened the absence of mere earthly good, spiritual prosperity was evidently not a stranger. Mr. Rice was deeply affected. He seized upon that paragraph in the first epistle of Peter, from the first verse to the eighth, and dilated upon it with unusual emphasis and unction. When he reached the passage, "the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire," he applied it with sympathizing tenderness to the circumstances of the afflicted saint before him. Seeming to understand the peculiarity of her sufferings, he poured into her wounded heart the healing consolations of that truth, that all these trials would "be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

That he might enjoy the opportunity of developing more fully his talent for pulpit and pastoral labor, was frequently desired by his judicious friends. Especially was this true towards the close of his earthly career, when he himself so ardently sought it. But the great Head of the church, in his unerring decisions, allowed not his wishes and those of his brethren to be gratified. The Lord doeth all things well.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

CHAPTER XIV.

REFERENCE TO MR. RICE'S EXTENSIVE INFLUENCE AND USEFULNESS—RESULTS OF HIS CHANGE OF SENTIMENT—WORK ON BAPTISM WRITTEN—USEFULNESS IN THE MISSION CAUSE—LETTER FROM MR. WADE—SUCCESS IN PROMOTING MINISTERIAL IMPROVEMENT—FAILURE TO RETURN TO INDIA VINDICATED—SOLEMN PLEDGE ON THIS SUBJECT—INTERESTING LETTER FROM MR. KINCAID—LETTER FROM MR. JUDSON—HOME MISSIONS PROJECTED—SUCCESS IN EXCITING THE CHURCHES TO THE EXERCISE OF BENEVOLENCE—UNION OF THE DENOMINATION PROMOTED.

THE part which Mr. Rice has borne in our denominational history, may well endear his memory to all our churches. It will be suitable in this chapter to bring together in one view, all those prominent particulars, in which he may be regarded as having effected vast good, and to notice some of the indications of that extensive influence which he possessed.

The circumstances under which he first became connected with the Baptists, must appear to the diligent observer of events, somewhat extraordinary. The simultaneous investigations of Judson and himself, when separated from each other, and the numerous obstacles through which they were compelled to press, in maintaining the triumph of

principle, furnish satisfactory evidence that they were guided and upheld by an unseen, but Almighty arm. The results of this change, in respect to the baptismal controversy, have been beneficial. They occupied a high and imposing position. The eye of the christian world was upon them, and when they came forth, declaring their solemn conviction that they had been negligent of an important command of their divine Lord, their testimony was heard by all. It was a startling, and unexpected annunciation. By it they entered their strong protest against some of the remaining errors of the great apostacy, and their decided disapproval of the conduct of thousands, who, in this respect, were living in habitual disobedience. When Mr. Rice returned to the United States, and from one end of the land to the other, was engaged in advocating the claims of a heathen world; he was also recognized as a convert from the errors of pedobaptism. All were compelled to own that he had personally sacrificed much in abandoning the practice of infant sprinkling. His influence in this respect, was by no means small. If not a word had been uttered by him on the subject of baptism, his example would still have spoken in a tone loud and forcible.

In many instances, he was required by the strong wish of his brethren, both among the Pedobaptists and Baptists to furnish the reasons, which produced a revolution in his own mind. This he never hesitated to do. With meekness and fear, the whole

process of investigation was stated. In doing so he would sometimes be much affected. A retrospect of the way along which the Lord had led him, created deep humiliation and devout gratitude.

The influence exercised on Pedobaptists was the greater on account of the kind and christian-like temper which he exhibited. He was not afraid to speak plainly on this subject. The error against which he remonstrated, he did not regard as inconsiderable. But he spoke the truth in love. By experience he knew the power of early formed prejudices, and while by the manifestation of the truth, he commended himself to the conscience, he endeavoured to do so by conciliating the good feelings of those he addressed. Nor was he unsuccessful, in producing conviction on the minds of Pedobaptists. Many in different parts of the United States, acknowledge him as the instrument of opening their eyes to the discovery of their error.

During his voyage to this country, he prepared a treatise, on the subject of baptism, in a series of letters to his brother. A considerable portion of this essay is occupied by the consideration of the Abrahamic Covenant. Had his life been longer spared, it is not improbable, that in an abridged form, it would have been given to the public. It may yet see the light.

The extensive usefulness of Mr. Rice is still more prominently manifest in the history of those great movements, by which as a denomination, the bap-

tized believers of this country, have sent the gospel to various and distant portions of the earth. These operations are mainly to be attributed to his influence. When he returned from Asia, in common with the great mass of other denominations, the Baptists were slumbering over their duty to a fallen world. They had scarcely allowed themselves to look over the many portions of the globe, upon which the dense gloom of moral night had settled. Scarcely had they remembered, that hundreds of millions of immortal beings were worshipping idol gods, and covered with guilt were hastening to the pit of despair. Nor could any means have so effectually aroused their slumbering energies, as the personal and unremitted exertions of Mr. Rice. Aside from his qualifications, physical, intellectual and moral, he had just returned from Asia, and had been a spectator of the horrors of heathenism. In addition to this, the fact that he had recently changed his views on the subject of baptism, and under circumstances so peculiar, gave him a commanding influence, an influence which could have been exercised by no other man in our country.

Few men, if any, then among the churches were prepared to take the enlarged and comprehensive views on the subject of missions, which were entertained by Mr. Rice. He aimed to enlist the entire denomination in the work. And he was to a great extent successful. To every part he travelled, visited almost every association, and corresponded

with nearly all the ministers of our land. By means of the Latter Day Luminary, many thousands of which were published, and by his own efforts circulated, a vast amount of information was diffused. These were the incipient measures which, with almost unexampled toil and sacrifice, he carried into effect. And what has been the result? American Baptist churches are sending out their evangelists to the four quarters of the globe. The tidings of salvation have been proclaimed in various tongues, and dying idolaters have heard the joyful sound.

Schools have been established, and the rising generation are receiving instruction in the various branches of knowledge. God's own word has been fairly and fully translated into other languages, and thousands of copies have been circulated. Innumerable pages of tracts have been published, and scattered abroad. Nor is this all. The word of the Lord has been quick and powerful: the dead have heard it, and started into life. From the valley of dry bones an exceeding great army has arisen, to aid in carrying forward the triumphs of the Prince of Peace.

The gospel has not only been preached, but it has been in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit. Those who have received the word of the Lord, have been buried with Christ in baptism, and have thus openly confessed him in the midst of idolatry. Churches after the primitive

order—churches acknowledging one Lord, one faith, one baptism—have been organized, which are walking daily after the apostle's doctrine and fellowship. Not a few have died in the faith, and have gone to meet their redeeming Lord on the plains of celestial light and glory. They were there to welcome our beloved Rice, as one of the chief instruments of their deliverance from the bond of iniquity.

These have been some of the glorious results of that system, which was commenced and sustained by the indefatigable exertions of the subject of this memoir. A letter addressed to him by Mr. Wade, who has been for many years laboring among the heathen, will refer to some of the details of this happy influence. Before this letter reached him, he had gone to a better world. The following is an extract:

"TAVOY, *April* 18, 1836.

"VERY DEAR BROTHER:—By the late arrival of new missionaries, I had the pleasure of receiving two letters from you—one dated September 7th, and the other June 27th—both in 1835; for which I feel much obliged to you. I have entertained a high respect and much affection for you, ever since our interview in Hamilton, previous to my first coming to India; and feel very happy for the evidence which letters afford, that the severe trials which you have subsequently endured are coming to a happy termination. I trust the blessed God designs that the clouds shall all disperse, and your

setting sun shine forth with as much brilliancy as when it rose.

"The short opportunity which Mrs. W. and myself had with you at the south, particularly at brother Turpin's, will long be remembered by us with peculiar pleasure. I rejoice to hear that the interest of the friends of Christ at the south, in regard to the missionary cause, is increasing. Sure I am, could they see what we see, and know what we know, respecting the real condition of these poor heathen, without God and without hope in the world, arguments would not be necessary to induce them to *feel* deep compassion towards them, or to show compassion by liberal and self-denying efforts to give them the Bible, and furnish them with living teachers of its sacred contents. Could they look on the churches raised up from among the degraded heathen in this land, and then ask, what consideration would make them willing to see this lovely number of God's elect, now rejoicing in hope of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, turned back at once to all the darkness and wretchedness of heathenism, to have every ray of gospel light which now cheers their hearts at once extinguished? I am sure they would shrink back from the thought, and exhort us earnestly to go on in the prosecution of the great design of preaching the gospel to every creature.

"In our excursions among the Karens east of Tavoy, during this dry season, Mrs. Wade and my-

self, had the repeated opportunity of sitting down at the table of our Lord, with about two hundred and fifty communicants. I could not contemplate the scene without thrilling emotions of gratitude and wonder, while contrasting their present condition with the one they were in a few years ago. These, however, were only a part of the converts even at the Tavoy station. The whole number amounts to above three hundred and fifty. During the tour I had the pleasure of baptizing forty-four; and brother Mason, who took a tour at the same time among the Karens, south of Tavoy, had the pleasure of baptizing forty-one. At a later period, three others have been baptized; many have asked for baptism, who have been put off to future opportunity, that we might have further acquaintance with them.

"Towards the close of our tour among the Karens east of Tavoy, we held a *protracted meeting*, the first which has ever been attempted in this mission. We undertook it as an untried thing, with much fear and anxiety, but the success was much beyond our most sanguine hopes. We saw what we have never before seen in a heathen land—a *whole assembly* melted into tears while listening to preaching and exhortation. A considerable number professed to obtain a hope during the meeting, and many others to obtain a deeper work of grace in their hearts than before, though they had indulged hope for some time previous."

The same general statement may be made respecting Mr. Rice's usefulness in the denomination, if we refer to the progress of ministerial improvement. Almost all the combined efforts of our churches, in this particular, have been commenced since the General Convention was organized. Subsequent to that period, a large number of flourishing seminaries of learning have been instituted. It is true, his influence was mainly directed to the sustentation of the Columbian College, but it was indirectly felt in the origination of others. From the time that he first became convinced of the importance of denominational effort, this object was brought distinctly before the churches in different parts of the country. In almost every State, the Baptists have been roused to the adoption of plans for the diffusion of useful knowledge, and especially for the improvement of such as might be brought into the work of the gospel ministry. Nor is it saying too much, that, in a majority of instances, these plans might be traced to his labors and influence.

It is known that some of his brethren were inclined to censure Mr. Rice for remaining in this country, after the formation of the Baptist General Convention. When this was effected, they supposed it became his duty to return to India, there to spend his life in active missionary employment. The many painful vicissitudes suffered by the Columbian College, have been attributed to the Divine disapprobation of his course in this particular. Though

in many respects the history of this institution has been dark and discouraging, it does not necessarily follow that its founder could be charged with dereliction of duty in determining to remain in this country. There is, indeed, ground to doubt whether it was most accordant with the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, so far to abstract his attention from the mission agency, while almost his entire time was devoted to the college. But that he was required by his heavenly Master to return to the east, is not so clear. Nothing is more certain than the existence of a purpose in his own mind, and this purpose entertained for a series of years, to reenter the missionary field. In his letters written to Mr. Judson, and by frequent declarations made to his friends in person, this purpose was manifest. It is known, too, that from year to year, the Board, and numerous judicious brethren, encouraged him to stay. In the progress of those educational plans which so much engrossed his thoughts, and in whose successful completion he took so lively an interest, there seemed from time to time an indispensable necessity for his personal agency. Thus the occupancy of the foreign field was at various periods postponed, until at length it was deemed by all most expedient that he should abandon the idea.

The following paper contains an expression of his views and feelings on this subject, written a few years after he arrived in this country. It may be

considered as an official communication. He thus writes:

"Impressed with the most sacred obligations to do every thing in my power to promote the cause of missions;—apprised that representations have been, and continue to be, industriously circulated, as false as they are injurious to myself and the mission, in their design and tendency;—permit me, dear sir, in order to counteract the mischievous influence of these representations, to declare, distinctly, explicitly, and solemnly—*to declare*, that it is my settled intention to depart from the United States to the missionary field, as soon as the state of things here shall render it, or allow it to be, in my view and in the view of the Board, compatible with duty for me to depart from this country. Permit me to accompany this declaration, too, with the sacred assurance that I consider my life as religiously devoted to the missionary cause, and that I conceive myself to be no more at liberty to *forsake* this object, than at liberty to forsake religion itself."

He considered his "life as religiously devoted to the missionary cause," and though he never saw the time when it appeared his duty to engage actually in missionary labor, all his exertions, toilsome and self-denying as they were, still continued to be sacred to this object. It may be seen, too, in the disclosures of eternity, that he really contributed more to promote the spread of the gospel by his labors in this country, than he could have done by

going abroad. And though there was a partial failure in the immediate work to which he was specially devoted, it may be ascertained that to him, more than to any other man, are the Baptists indebted for the origination of all those institutions which now exist in various parts of our land. Much has been accomplished by his detention, not only in promoting sound learning, and elevating the standard of ministerial improvement, but in rousing the minds of individuals to contemplate their personal responsibilities to the heathen world.

A short time before his death, the fact was made known to him, that under his influence Mr. Kincaid was first inclined to think seriously of preaching among the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ. This is but one of the many instances, in which a holy impulse was given by Mr. Rice, resulting in unspeakable blessings to the world. The annunciation of the fact just referred to, is contained in a letter, dated

AVA, *February* 12, 1835.

"VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I have been exceedingly gratified to receive a letter from you, dated Augusta, Ga. April 24th, 1834, and also a copy of the Religious Herald. It is impossible for me to forget the first, and the only time I have ever had the pleasure of seeing you. I heard you preach three times in the course of twenty-four hours, on the subject of carrying the gospel to benighted India. It was about six months after I had been

brought to *hope* in Christ Jesus, *the sinner's friend*, and though I had felt a burning desire to publish the gospel of *peace* to a ruined world, yet I had never thought of the hundreds of millions that were sitting in darkness *without God, and without hope.* From that day onward, I thought of the heathen world—an impression was made which time could not efface, and I began to pray for pagans of every land.

"In a short time, my spirit was drawn out to the work of bearing the news of eternal life to the poor wretched heathen, and I resolved, if Providence should ever open the way, to forsake all, and go. Again and again I counted the cost, but on the whole, felt willing to make the sacrifice. I will, however, now confess to you, that I never understood *really*, what it cost to be a missionary. I did feel compassion for the heathen, but I did not know what it was to be in want and in peril; what it was to be alone; what it was to be opposed, reviled, and threatened. No, my dear brother, I did not know what it cost to be faithful, and keep on the side of Christ—to undertake to stem the current, let what will come, had never been presented to me in its true light; but God who is rich in mercy, has kept us from falling, and to his holy name be the glory.

"Your preaching, which first led me to think of being a missionary among the heathen, is as fresh in my mind, as though it was but yesterday. Never can I forget your exposition of this passage, *'let*

your light so shine, &c.' I rejoice to learn that the Columbian College is in a fair way to rise. I do trust your efforts will be crowned with success, and that the institution will prove a source of immense good in the rapidly growing states of America. The churches are truly coming up to the work of the Lord—the armies of Israel are waking from a long slumber, and we must expect that Satan will arm himself for a fierce contest.

"This is evidently a most important era in the history of the church; preparations are making among the friends of God over all the world, for some great work. What industry, what oneness of purpose is every where apparent, and above all, what multitudes are thronging the gates of Zion, crying out, 'what shall I do to be saved?' This prophecy is being fulfilled, 'the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted—it is the day of the Lord's power.' Before you receive this, you will have learned that dear brother Wade, together with all the new missionaries, have reached the shores of Burmah. Brother Judson, and all the rest were well by my last letters.

"During the past year, a goodly number have been baptised in the provinces, and a number of Karens have embraced the cause of Christ in Rangoon. I am not able to give you the definite number. In Ava, during the past year, I have given away between twenty and thirty thousand tracts, and portions of the word of God; and the gospel

has been preached to many thousands, both in Ava, Umerapora, and Saquire. The opposition of the government has occasionally interrupted our labors, and alarmed the people, but I trust some seed sown will spring up, and yield a precious harvest in time to come. Pray for us, that we may do some little good. Having a number of letters to write on short notice, I must be brief. May the grace of our Lord Jesus rest upon you, and upon the great work in which you are engaged, is the prayer of your ever affectionate,

E. KINCAID."

An interesting communication received about the same time from Mr. Judson, will present his views respecting Mr. Rice's conduct, and the extent of his usefulness:

MAULMEIN, *May* 9, 1835.

"DEAR BROTHER RICE:—Your very interesting letters of April last year, accompanying a file of the Religious Herald, reached me in December, on the return of brother and sister Wade. I am interested in all your efforts, and the success that crowns them. I doubt not that the Columbian College will be an honor to the country, and especially to the Baptist cause, an instrument in the hand of God, by which he will diffuse the glory and extend the reign of his Son. In your former connection with the board, and your subsequent devotion to the college, you, have doubtless committed some mistakes, and been betrayed into some sins; but the unjust reproach with which you have been liberally visited, are in

my opinion disproportionate to the errors charged to your account.

"I confidently expect, that a reaction will take place; and that when temporary and local excitements shall pass away, your name will be enrolled among the benefactors of our country, and of that denomination into which we were ingrafted together. The praise of man however, is not the boon for which we strive. Our mark is higher, our crown incorruptible. And let us have faith to believe that we shall assuredly obtain. O glorious prospect to be owned of the Saviour, and to be welcomed to seats of immortal glory!

"You give me some reasons to hope, that the Religious Herald will continue to be sent me; if so, I shall feel very grateful. The Christian Watchman is now the only paper, with which I am regularly furnished.

"Let me hear from you as often as possible. I remain dear brother Rice,

Yours, most affectionately,

A. JUDSON."

In adverting to the efforts of Mr. Rice in the denomination, it will not be just to omit the fact that for many years the project of supplying the spiritual destitution of our own country, occupied much of his thoughts. While he had succeeded in bringing about the establishment of missions among the Indian tribes, he desired to see a system of itinerant labor in different parts of the states, in successful

operation. At the meeting of the board in 1821, the subject was discussed and a committee appointed of which he was chairman. The following report prepared by him, was adopted by the board.

"The committee on the subject of a *system of domestic missionary operations*, report:

"That, from the attention they have been able to bestow upon the subject, they feel persuaded, that an enlarged system of domestic missionary operations is needed, and would be greatly conducive to the promotion of the objects of the General Convention.

"Their view is, that such persons only should be employed in this service, whose character and talents would command general attention and respect, and whose zeal should be fervent; and that such should be commissioned to travel and preach, under the leading idea of *domestic missionaries*, for the benefit of the churches, and of the community. That, connected with a primary attention to the business of preaching and promoting the welfare of the churches and of the community, they should be instructed to visit associations, and endeavor to give them correct and favorable views on the subject of missions, and of the general plan of education adopted by the convention—to obtain funds by public collections at meetings, or otherwise, for missionary purposes—to originate and encourage missionary and education societies, female mite and charitable societies, &c. &c. and solicit subscrip-

tions and donations, as circumstances might render proper for the various purposes of the convention.

"A system of this kind, it is believed, well conducted, would be calculated to revive many languishing churches, and originate new ones—would tend to produce harmony and good understanding throughout the whole denomination, and to strengthen and cement the bands of love and union of the body—would be in no small degree efficient in supplying resources to the Board of Managers of the Convention—and would more than support itself by the public general collections for missionary purposes.

"Under these impressions the committee respectfully submit the following resolutions.

"1. That domestic missionaries be appointed, pursuant to the system recommended in the above mentioned report, in such parts of the country as can be supplied by suitable characters.

"2. That instructions, conformably to the foregoing suggestions be made out and printed, duly signed by one of the vice-presidents, the president not being present, and by the corresponding secretary.

"3. That the agent of the Board be instructed to furnish each of said missionaries with a suitable subscription book.

"4. That the agent of the Board, with the concurrence of the corresponding secretary, and the

president, or one of the vice-presidents, as above-mentioned, agree with said missionaries for their compensation, varying according to circumstances; but in no case to exceed the amount of their public general collections for missionary purposes. These resolutions were adopted."

One of the most interesting aspects in which the usefulness of Mr. Rice is to be regarded, consists in the waking up, or rather calling into more vigorous exercise, the benevolent principles of the gospel. These principles are possessed more or less, by every christian. The selfish feelings of depraved human nature, if not entirely extirpated from the bosom, are brought into subjection. An ascendency is gained by those sentiments and tempers, which are produced by the divine Spirit when he sheds abroad in the heart, the love of Christ. While such are the characteristics of every true disciple, there may be circumstances, favorable or unfavorable to the development and improvement of the fruits of the spirit. Before the efforts of Mr. Rice, the Baptist denomination had contributed comparatively little pecuniary aid for the extension of the gospel, either at home or abroad. This was the fact also, in relation to the other sects of professing christians. Such a state of things could not be regarded as the result of unwillingness, but the want of opportunity. The churches had never been taught their duty in this respect. The woes of a fallen world had not been brought distinctly before

their eyes, and the obligation to employ all their resources for the salvation of others, pressed upon their attention. They were, therefore, unaccustomed to the luxury of doing good on an extended scale. But when the subject of this memoir passed through our land, and gave utterance to the benevolent impulses which animated his bosom; when constrained by love to Christ, and love to souls, he expatiated on the guilt and sorrows of those who hasten after another God, and implored aid on their behalf, he touched a chord which vibrated on many hearts. To his unutterable joy, he found he was addressing those who had been baptised into the same spirit. They listened to his appeals, approved his plans, and were ready to co-operate with him in their execution. From the slumber in which they had been enwrapped, they started up, and with eager hearts they cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have us to do." With efficiency they began to labor for the conversion of a world. They counselled with each other, contributed of their substance, and sought by earnest prayer, the divine direction and blessing. Thus, the benevolent principle being brought into exercise, it has continued to expand and strengthen, while numerous plans for the good of the world have been brought into successful operation. Instead of being satisfied with the mere selfish desire of personal comfort here, and salvation hereafter, the churches have found active employment, as instruments of extending the empire

of the Son of God. Not hiding their light under a bushel, they have been active in holding it forth, and in blessing others, have been themselves, doubly blessed. In this respect, an invaluable good has been conferred on the denomination, and if Mr. Rice's labors had resulted in nothing more, he would have found in this alone, an ample recompense. It was often to his mind an occasion of joyful thanksgiving to God, that this holy, active benevolence, was so generally manifest among the churches; and especially, when he witnessed the internal prosperity and rapid growth of those churches, which were most remarkable for this spirit.

It should be stated also, that by these endeavors, the churches of the United States became more internally acquainted with each other. Previously, little intercourse had been enjoyed, but being brought together to consult on the great objects connected with the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, a bond was created, which united them together in holy and endeared fellowship. It was one of the strongest desires of Mr. Rice, to see those who held one Lord, one faith, one baptism, joined in one great phalanx, bringing their concentrated forces to bear against the powers of darkness. Writing to the corresponding secretary of the convention, he says:

"It gives me pleasure to mention here, the interesting occasion on which you, sir, were also present in Richmond, at the formation of the Baptist

Convention for the state of Virginia. These state conventions, it is believed, at no distant day, will bring the whole Baptist denomination in this country, into combined, harmonious, and powerful action. I am persuaded that pious people are ever ready to *come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty*, when proper measures are adopted to bring them forward, and to put them into motion. This persuasion is amply sustained by the result of the efforts of the standing committee in and about Boston."

How far his influence was felt, may be determined by the fact, that as early as 1815, he was elected to the presidency of Transylvania University, at Lexington, Kentucky, which appointment he thought proper to decline. In 1832, he was appointed president of the Georgetown College, in the same state, which invitation was also negatived. These flattering offers were not sufficient to tempt him from the toilsome and unthankful office of collecting funds for the mission and college. His own ease and aggrandizement, he sought not, but the good of the churches, and the interests of a fallen world. Had he chosen to do so at various times, he might have retired from the agency, and permanently located in some comfortable position; where, with honor to himself, and profit to others, he could have spent his days. But the great objects for whose accomplishment he had consecrated his life, he was unwilling to abandon.

CHAPTER XV.

REFLECTIONS—REFERENCE TO MR. RICE'S NATURAL ACUTENESS OF MIND—POWER OF ARGUMENTATION—CONFIDENCE IN HIS OWN POWERS—DECISION—ABILITY TO MEET GREAT EMERGENCIES—DEFECTS—DEPENDENCE ON SUPERNATURAL INFLUENCE—HUMILITY—SELF DENIAL—DISINTERESTEDNESS—SPIRIT OF FORGIVENESS—LETTER—ANECDOTES—CONCERN FOR THE DIVINE HONOR—TESTIMONY OF MR. JUDSON.

THE distinguished elevation to which some of the great men of the earth have been brought, is to be attributed to a combination of favorable circumstances, without which, they would have remained in utter obscurity; 'alike unknowing and unknown.' In their character, none of the essential elements of true greatness were concentrated. In most cases, however, it will be found that those who have become celebrated in any department of life's busy scenes, owe their distinction to some peculiar endowments of nature, which circumstances may have developed and matured.

Who will say that the lawgiver of Israel was not highly gifted in those qualities of mind and heart, which prepared him in an eminent degree, for the station he filled? Was not the son of Jesse by his strength of intellect, his courage, and address, peculiarly fitted to preside over the nation

whose history occupies so much of the sacred page. From the numberless instances of this kind, may be selected the distinguished emperor of the French. The indications of his greatness were not alone evinced, when by his deeds all Europe was struck with terror, and the world with amazement. Even in boyhood, those traits of character were discovered which made him what he was. Or, if we turn to a less brilliant, but more lovely spectacle of true greatness, the celebrated doctor William Carey, the same fact is apparent. His almost unprecedented aptitude for acquiring language, and his indomitable perseverance, were as natural as they were remarkable.

This train of thought is suggested, in sketching the intellectual and moral character of the subject of this biography. In many important particulars, he was naturally an extraordinary man. He possessed a high order of mind; it was alike comprehensive and discriminating. While pursuing a course of study, he always gave the preference to those branches which demanded close and thorough investigation—such as language and mathematics. This was indicative of the peculiar cast of his mind. Unlike too many who obtain celebrity in the world, he thought for himself. He did not follow the beaten track, simply because it had been trodden by others. His conceptions were remarkable in a high degree, not only for originality, but distinctness. The acuteness of his powers of inves-

tigation was always manifest in those effusions of his pen, which were of a polemic character. By a single glance he seemed to look through the subject, comprehending all its relations and bearings. In the arrangement of his arguments, he was skilful and perspicuous.

The discussion of what has been familiarly termed the Abrahamic covenant, and which, a few years since, was more frequently the subject of disputation than at present, was entered upon by him with much spirit, and conducted in a manner highly creditable to his power of reasoning. On several important occasions, when engaged in debate, the native vigor of his mind was exhibited by the forcible and masterly manner in which he confronted his opponents, and defended his own positions; and when in the pulpit he deemed it necessary to controvert any erroneous sentiment, or to maintain an important doctrinal truth, this same energy of thought was developed.

Connected with these observations, reference may be made to a very remarkable characteristic of Mr. Rice. It consisted in an unwavering confidence in his own powers of mind. If he fixed his eye on any attainable object, and determined to reach it, he scarcely allowed himself to entertain a doubt of success. He was very little in the habit of consulting probabilities. With a giant hand, he laid hold of the various instruments by which his purposes were to be effected, feeling secure in the

native energy with which he was endowed. This striking peculiarity in his mental constitution was evinced from early childhood to the end of life.

The reader will remember the circumstances under which he was employed by the Board of Commissioners, as their missionary to the east. Not one in a thousand would have consented to go forth upon such conditions: most would have considered the difficulties insurmountable. Not so with Mr. Rice: he had confidence in his ability to comply with the terms, and betook himself to a work as unpleasant as it was arduous.

It was this decision of character that led him on, despite of all obstructions, in the course of useful labor which marked his history. "When he returned to this country," said Dr. Going, "and entered on a course of efforts to sustain foreign missions, the enterprise was new to our people, and they were without the lights of experience. All turned their eyes to Mr. Rice as a kind of oracle, and his opinions were almost, of course, adopted. And as he became acquainted with those with whom he was associated, it is not improbable that he perceived, that generally, however ardently attached to the cause of missions, they would not add much to him in conference, and, of course, that he must consult himself chiefly, in order to accomplish the object before him. Besides—he met with no small measure of opposition from many who should have strengthened his hands and aided his efforts, and

opposition tends greatly to strengthen the decided character. And again, he at length found himself deserted by many who had stricken hands with him, and from whom he seemed to have a right to expect better things; and desertion, too, more than almost any other thing, seems to strengthen such a mind, though it may break down one which is naturally feeble and irresolute.

"We have proof of this trait in his character, not only in his enterprise of awakening the denomination to missionary effort, and his perseverance in efforts to accomplish it amid discouragements, but especially in the pertinacity with which he clung to the college when it was nearly deserted by its friends, and apparently sinking under its misfortunes. And an illustration of it is afforded in an incident which occurred in 1832. While at Providence, R. I., Mr. Rice had a slight paralytical affection, and was informed by the attending physician, that he would probably be soon visited by a recurrence of the shock, which would terminate his life. A friend asked him if he was ready to die?—To the inquiry, he replied, 'Yes, though I should like to bring up the college first.'"

His capacity for meeting great emergencies, referred to in the preceding extract, was one of the best evidences of his intellectual power. There were periods in his history, when he seemed ready to be crushed beneath an accumulation of care and trial; but even then he stood erect, and with manly

fortitude sustained it all. Though the dark cloud might spread over his horizon, and the tempest itself beat upon his head, he still remained undismayed. He was always buoyant, and full of hope. His brother said of him: "Luther always looked for prosperity, and he always expected that to-morrow would not only be a fair day, but a little fairer than to-day."

These were his prominent mental qualities. In full, we may say in the language of Dr. Chapin, that "he possessed powers which would have enabled him to shine in any of the orbits in which great men choose to move. He might have distinguished himself in arms, or, had he given himself up to literary and scientific pursuits, he might have ranked with the first scholars of the age. But he took a different course: he gave up the world, he renounced his private interest, and devoted himself to the highest interest of his species."

The peculiar structure of his mind, was in some respects the occasion of habits which could not be justified by his most partial friends. His independence and self confidence urged him too often to the pursuance of plans, which were not well judged, and which probably would not have been adopted, had he previously conferred with others. And, when his schemes had partially failed, and he was advised to abandon them, a degree of adherence, amounting to obstinacy was indulged. Had he in some things been less confident in his own judg-

ment, he would most probably have avoided some of the trials, through which he passed. Thus the very excellencies of men, may become the most vulnerable points in their character, and what constitutes the means of their elevation, may become the sources of anxiety and pain.

It has been already stated, that Mr. Rice was prone at one period of his life, to undue levity. This was doubtless an extreme to which he was led, by the natural vivacity of his disposition, looking as he delighted to do on the bright side of things, and changing every day the scenes he witnessed, and the circle of friends in which he moved, there was danger of yielding to such a habit. He afterwards however, not only deplored, but rectified it.

From what has been said respecting the strong reliance he exercised on his own ability, to execute whatever he deemed important to be done, it must not be understood that he failed to recognize his dependence on supernatural aid. This would be doing great injustice to his character. Perhaps no man entertained a deeper sense of the utter inutility of human efforts, without the divine blessing! Not only was this indicated by discourses from the pulpit, but in all his intercourse with his brethren. Nor was it to be regarded as a mere opinion, it was an enduring sentiment, deeply engraved upon his heart. While no opposition from man could daunt, or impediments deter him in his onward progress, he

maintained an humble sense of his feebleness, if forsaken of God.

He was ready in the prosecution of his schemes, to adopt as his motto: "I can do all things;" but he never forgot to add, "through Christ which strengtheneth me." How much he felt the need of heavenly influence in the accomplishment of his schemes, was manifest in the habitual exercise of the spirit of prayer. What ardent supplications did he send up to the throne on behalf of the Columbian College. The mission cause too, how constantly did he remember it in prayer. Said a christian brother, "he prayed in my family, and that prayer I shall not forget. Every one in the house was named, and all the churches of the state, all ministers, schools, and colleges, and especially, the Columbian College; all mission stations, and the missionaries—the city of Washington, all our cities; our nation, and the world." The feelings of his soul were poured forth in a gushing tide, while with reverence and humility, he held audience with the Divine Majesty.

With all the superior intellectual power of Mr. Rice, he was an humble man. He knew how to condescend to men of low estate. In his more familiar association with the pious, he gave the most decided evidence of a lowly spirit. At some times, in conducting his agency, there appeared in his manner, a degree of sternness, and at others, an undue lightness, which left rather an unfavorable

impression on those who did not know him well. This was a consequence resulting almost necessarily from his daily employments. But when these were laid aside, and with a christian brother, or in a circle of pious friends, he could engage in free conversation, his serious, humble, and affectionate manner, were observed by all. When he could thus freely unbosom himself, the evidence of deep, experimental piety was not wanting. Then his conversation was truly edifying.

The whole history of his life as recorded in the preceding pages, presents a rare exemplification of self-denial and disinterestedness. Had he desired to promote his own fame, or mere worldly interest, the means were ample and at hand. But he sought no places of distinction, and coveted not the honor which cometh from man. His own ease was never consulted. A sacrifice was made of most of those enjoyments which might have been lawfully retained.

It was thought by some, that he did not sufficiently regard his comfort and personal appearance. In numerous instances, when donations were made to purchase some article of clothing which he seemed to need, instead of applying them to this purpose, they were used to meet the pressing necessities of the college. He literally lived not unto himself. His was that noble expansiveness of benevolence which includes in its operations the entire world. To make the race of man better

and more happy, was the great object for which he desired to live.

On a certain occasion, he was heard to express unaffected pity for an individual, who, with much toil and economy, had amassed a fortune, and who, without employing it for useful purposes, was eager to accumulate still more and more. Such a spirit is as grovelling as it is sinful. How much more dignified and worthy an immortal mind—that sympathizing tenderness which weeps over the sorrows of fallen humanity, and desires to relieve. That spirit,

> "Which lays its own advantage by
> To seek a neighbor's good."

This was the spirit of Luther Rice. Few have been under its influence to a greater extent.

His friend and brother, the Rev. Mr. Meredith, observes respecting his disinterestedness:

"If much is due to the deceased for the value of his services, no less is due him for the great personal sacrifices, at which those services were rendered. We make the assertion without the fear of contradiction, that there is not a man in the country who has endured more personal hardships, who has made more personal sacrifices, or who has cared less for his own interest, than Luther Rice. Possessed of talents and attainments of the first order, which would have commanded for him the highest and most lucrative stations in our churches or colleges, and in disregard of offers repeatedly made to him

to that effect—while others were indulging themselves in the comforts of domestic life, and reaping the social and intellectual advantages of a permanent charge, this devoted man was toiling through winter's cold and summer's heat, by day and by night, in health and in sickness—sometimes for scanty wages, and sometimes for none at all—for the sake of promoting the cause he had so much at heart.

For more than twenty years has he been thus employed. The prime, we may say the whole of his life, has been thus devoted. Like his blessed master, he has been without a home, and without a place to lay his head, except that afforded by the hand of charity or of personal friendship. He has died as he lived, comparatively among strangers. The kind and soothing attentions of wife and children, the usual alleviations of the dying couch, were consolations which he never knew. No tear of kindred affection bedewed his grave. And his only effects—"his horse and sulky, and baggage," in his own dying words, "belonged to the colege in Washington City."

The following is from the pen of Dr. Going, of Granville College, Ohio.

"He was eminently *disinterested*. For twelve years he labored incessantly and laboriously for the small pittance of $400 per annum, beyond his travelling expenses. We doubt whether there was an individual in the United States who endured so much

exposure, who travelled so extensively, and who at the same time preached so much; and we doubt, also, whether there are more than a very few, who could endure so much. To meet the wants of the college, he eventually relinquished all these small savings, together with some $2,000 or $3,000, which he inherited as a patrimony; so that in 1826, he was without a cent in the world. From that time till his death, he travelled almost constantly to preach and collect for the college, without the least support from the college, or salary from any other institution. Indeed, we believe that he, in a great measure, defrayed his travelling expenses from the sale of a few religious books, while the balance was borne by individual friends, who also furnished him with his wearing apparel."

Frequent allusion has been made in these pages to the opposition, which, from various sources, he was compelled to meet. By an ungodly world, he was often persecuted, and his name cast out as evil. From some also, who ought to have manifested a better spirit, he suffered very unkind treatment. His conduct on these occasions, was firm and dignified.

It was not easy to drive him from any ground which he thought proper to occupy; and in some instances, he doubtless, was unduly tenacious in preferring his own plans, and adhering to them, notwithstanding the remonstrances of many very judicious friends. Perhaps too, in meeting such

remonstrances, or the opposition of foes, he might have been betrayed into an unwarrantable severity of style. But he was not accustomed to indulge in rancorous abuse, or to cherish the spirit of resentment. His soul was too large, and too much influenced by the generous principles of the gospel, to allow a lodgment for the lower and baser feelings of our nature.

Often did he bear in silence the most vindictive abuse. When any thing of this kind was noticed, it was only when he considered it essential to the vindication of truth and righteousness, as identified with his own character. "So far as I am personally concerned," he remarks to a friend, in regard to some charges alleged against him, "they can give me but little uneasiness, 'for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.' Of the Saviour, if I recollect, they said, 'nay, but he deceiveth the people,' and accounted him a Sabbath breaker, and encourager of publicans and sinners.

"The apostles, I think Paul intimates, were regarded as deceivers, and yet true, that he himself, with others, was 'slanderously reported,' and so on. I have not time, and if I had, have not, I hope, through the rich and precious grace of God, the disposition to trace these things, or the smallest wish to inculpate any one. Lately, for which I desire abundantly and humbly to glorify God, our Father, and our Saviour, I have had a most sweet

and happy state of mind, in relation to any and all that have ever injured me, or wished me harm. O! that is a saying of our dear Redeemer, of inexpressible sweetness: 'Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.' And I now read with emotions of peculiar delight, the injunctions of the blessed Jesus: 'Love your enemies—do good to them that hate you—bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.' "

Writing to another brother, to whom he made acknowledgments in regard to some unpleasant differences which existed between them, he says: "The third day of last month—a day never to be forgotten by me—it pleased the Father of mercies, as I humbly trust, as I was pursuing my solitary journey, and thinking over past occurrences, to remove from my bosom, distinctly, all corrosiveness and unpleasantness of feeling, in relation to all persons with whom I ever had any differences, or who had ever done me wrong, or who I supposed had so done. I felt that I could cordially take any of them by the hand, and, without any concession or apology on their part, indulge towards them the kindest feelings, and sincerely rejoice in their welfare.

"This exercise gave me new and most sweet and happy views of such passages as this: 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.' And a most particular sweetness appeared in this passage: 'Forgive, and ye shall be

forgiven.' And blessed be God, the exercise of this nature, which arose thus distinctly in my mind that day, seems to have become the settled habit of my mind and heart, and I would not part with it for ten thousand worlds!"

A circumstance, evincing his forbearance in the sufferance of injury, occurred not very long after his return to this country. Having been requested, by a lady of highly respectable connections, to baptize her, although it was ascertained not to be agreeable to the wishes of many of her particular friends, he determined without hesitation to discharge his duty.

A few hours after the solemn rite had been performed, a gentleman, to him then unknown, but who proved to be the lady's brother, came to the house where he was, and requested to see him. Having walked to the door, the stranger intimated that he had some business with him, and proposed to him to walk a few steps. He turned to find his hat, but the stranger remarked that it was unnecessary, and they proceeded together a few paces in the street. He was asked, whether he was the individual who had baptized his sister. A prompt affirmative reply was given, when a violent assault was commenced on his person. He meekly received it, without any resistance, and commenced slowly walking back to the door, his assailant repeating the blows until he had reached the steps. Turning round on the persecutor, who had almost spent his strength with

exertion and rage, he looked upon him with the placid countenance of a lamb, and mildly said, "May the best of heaven's blessings rest upon you." The young man, mortified and ashamed, hastened from the place. To some of his companions he declared his chagrin, that resistance had not been offered. A severe personal chastisement would have been preferred to this imperturbable gentleness.

At another time, in one of his sermons, he had so offended a man who was present in the congregation, that he was threatened with summary vengeance. Before the people dispersed, the enraged individual met him, and said, "I will take your life before you leave the neighborhood." His countenance was unchanged, and in the most dignified, yet calm manner, he simply replied, "I hope not."

Among the most distinguishing traits in the character of Mr. Rice, was his deep concern for the promotion of the divine honor. Love to God was a deep and prevailing passion of his soul, and he seemed constantly desirous of glorifying him. "There was much truth," said a christian minister, "in a remark in a late number of the Herald, relative to the character of our deceased brother Rice. The remark to which I allude is the following: 'He loved the souls of men, and therefore sought their salvation; but *it was mainly because he saw in the recovery of sinners the exhibition of God's glory, that he so ardently longed for their salvation.*'

"This trait in his character served as the foundation for yet another. He possessed a quick discernment of the various bearings, and the relative importance of the different efforts in which the church of Christ is engaged, with the view of diffusing the blessings of salvation, and a knowledge of the glory of God; and was *scrupulously exact in giving to each object the particular attention which its relative importance demanded.* To this power of discrimination, and this just distribution of his care and attention to the various objects presented before him, may be attributed much of his extensive usefulness. No man, perhaps, felt more sincere rejoicing at the conversion of a sinner, than he did; yet he never suffered the interest excited, in any particular case, to abstract his attention from the great plans of benevolence which have been adopted, to promote the general extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. It may justly be doubted, whether he ever contemplated the conversion of a solitary soul, without contemplating, at the same time, the influence it was likely to produce, in favoring the conversion of the world."

In reply to inquiries made of him, Mr. Judson thus writes respecting Mr. Rice: "You ask me to give some account of his intellectual, moral, and religious character; but as my personal acquaintance with him terminated almost twenty years ago, I do not feel so competent to do this, as many others who have known him in subsequent years. My

views of his character, however, most perfectly coincide with those presented in the history of the Columbian College, in the fifth number of the Christian Review, to which I beg leave to refer you. I would only add, that I have ever considered him to be a faithful, warm-hearted friend, and a most devoted christian. Notwithstanding the various reports which have been circulated about him, I have never entertained the slightest doubt of his moral integrity. I subjoin the following extract from his last letter to me, dated June 25th, 1836.

"'My health became much reduced last fall and winter, but is now, through divine mercy, quite restored. My strength is not, however, what it was fifteen or twenty years ago. I am now past fifty-three years of age, and feel the effects of time and toil, in the diminution of energy and vigor; but I hope that my powers will not quite decay, till I shall have the happiness of seeing the prosperity of the Columbian College—till from that institution some laborers shall have gone forth into some part of the heathen world, to preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

"'Should my life and health be preserved, I expect to continue constantly travelling, as heretofore, for about two years to come. After that, I hope the Lord will provide for my becoming somewhat stationary, and allow me to rest a little, before I go hence, and be no more on earth. But in reference

to this, as in all things else, I wish ever to be able devoutly to say, the will of the Lord be done! O, for a constant, lively, effectual sense of the divine presence and glory! O, for a heart truly conformed to that excellent basis of duty and happiness—to glorify God and enjoy him forever!' "

CHAPTER XVI.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS OF MR. RICE—HIS VIEWS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUTH—DEPRAVITY OF HUMAN NATURE—INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT—DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY—PRACTICAL TENDENCY OF THESE DOCTRINES——HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY——MINISTERIAL FAITHFULNESS—ORIGIN OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, IN LYNN, MASS.—CLOSE COMMUNION—IMPORTANCE OF WELL WRITTEN BIOGRAPHIES.

In closing a review of the life and labors of the lamented Rice, the reader will doubtless be gratified with a brief reference to his religious sentiments. This is the more desirable, inasmuch as there is danger of regarding too lightly, the particular tenets which a man may entertain. The latitudinous idea, that it is of no importance what opinions are held, provided the facts of the gospel are believed; or, provided the life is externally moral, is unscriptural and absurd. And yet this idea is widely prevalent. Although there are many things contained in the divine word, which at first cannot be apprehended by the christian, and indeed, many truths that will give exercise to prayerful investigation among the most experienced disciples, it is nevertheless clear, that certain great fundamental doctrines necessarily lie at the foundation of experimental and practical religion. Nor is any doctrine or truth a matter a little importance; whether im-

mediately connected with salvation, or more remotely, it deserves to be studied and understood. To know what God has taught in his own word, and to make his instructions our delight—"a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path," is alike right and safe.

How important it is to be rooted and grounded in the truth—to be established and built up in our most holy faith, may be determined by adverting to the history of the church in every age. No period has been exempt from the influence of error. Like a desolating tide, it has sometimes threatened to undermine the foundations of christian hope, and to sweep over the church of God, leaving only the ruins of its former greatness and glory. Unscriptural sentiments find a ready response in the decisions of an unsanctified heart. "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." This is the reason why error is so rife and rampant; and furnishes an impressive argument for the daily and prayerful perusal of the sacred Scriptures.

A clear and profound knowledge of divine truth, was, in the estimation of Mr. Rice, unspeakably important. Contemplating the relation which exists between the views and experience of a true christian, be thus writes, in a familiar style, to a pious friend:

"A point in the great economy of salvation, which has recently occupied my thoughts, it may not, perhaps, be entirely uninteresting to you to

employ a few lines upon, in the filling up of a few moments, devoted to the grateful, sacred service of sincere friendship. That point is contained in the following question: Whether both the experience, and the sentiments previously entertained by a child of grace in *passing from death unto life*, have not a reciprocal bearing upon one another, and enter into, so as to modify, and give form to the religious *sentiments* and views of *doctrine*, subsequently embraced and held by the individual?

"As far as I can make up any definite judgment upon this subject, by a recurrrence to my own experience, or by observations made upon what is manifested by others, such is the fact. The exercises of mind and heart at this important period, are acted upon, and moulded by the sentiments previously adopted; and the sentiments thus previously adopted, impart more or less of the characteristic modification and development of those exercises; while both together, contribute to the formation and distinctive character of the doctrinal views subsequently adopted.

"This view of the case too, it seems to me, affords one useful consideration; that is, it suggests a satisfactory reason, at least in some degree, for the apparent diversities that occur in the religious experiences of persons, and in the views of christian doctrine to which they will ultimately adhere. These ultimate diversities, no doubt, are greatly widened by other circumstances, yet all traceable

to the same primary and pervading principle. It also suggests very forcibly, the importance of having correct ideas in the stamp first impressed upon the mind."

The reader has already perceived, that when first interested on the subject of religion, Mr. Rice was deeply impressed with a sense of his criminality as a transgressor of the law of God. Throughout future life, he maintained the sentiment, not only that man had apostatized, but that his guilt was wilful, and beyond expression, malignant. The due apprehension of this truth by the sinner, he considered as intimately connected with just views of other essential doctrines, and with the formation of an elevated christian character. Writing on this subject, and recommending to his correspondent great caution in communicating instruction to others, he remarks:

"What you observe relative to Mrs. C. pleases me much. I see nothing particularly faulty in your conversation with her—to the real convert, comfort is to be administered—to the unrenewed sinner, continuing such, whatever be his situation in other respects, nothing but terror can be presented. 'Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with them. Wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him.' Not to distress any really humble soul, nor to encourage unwarrantably and dangerously, any unconverted person, requires a skill and wisdom which can only result from divine teaching. How

awfully solemn and momentous is the charge of souls? 'Who is sufficient for these things?'

"Skill in these things is only to be gained by prayer, and close, humble waiting upon God. The most important things are exceedingly plain in the Bible; but to apply them wisely and judiciously, can only result from the teachings of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the importance of diligently studying the sacred Scriptures, and of ardently plying the throne of Almighty grace, in humble, incessant prayer.

"It is highly important that persons be made sensible of the deep, total, and awful depravity of the heart, and of their infinite criminality before God. 'The plague of the heart' lies deep, and till it be discovered, there is no prospect of a saving application to Christ. The person must become all over leprous, (Lev. xiii. 13,) that he may be pronounced clean; they must receive a sentence of death in themselves, before they will trust in that God who raises the dead. In fine, when they perceive themselves to be lost, they are prepared to receive the aid of a Saviour.

"In forming an opinion of a person's religious state, I am anxious to know first, whether they have had this proper sense of their own sinfulness and guilt! and secondly, whether their love to Christ mostly regards *him* or *themselves!* whether they love him because he is *holy*, or only because they think he intends to *save* them."

While he thus beheld man as a depraved being, from whose heart God had been expelled, he not only believed in the necessity of an entire revolution of moral character, but that this change must be effected by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, through the instrumentality of truth. He delighted to honor this agent as the author of all spiritual life. The same may be remarked respecting his views of the atonement. Man's guilt and condemnation he considered as utterly beyond the possibility of removal, excepting through the mediation of the Son of God; who died for sinners, and rose again for their justification. Christ, and him crucified, was a theme upon which he delighted to meditate. He gloried only in the cross of the Lord Jesus.

He was a decided believer in the doctrine of divine sovereignty. God was contemplated as working all things after the counsel of his own will. It was to him a truth full of interest, that those who are recognized as the heirs of eternal life, have been called according to God's "eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus, before the world began." That "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified."—This doctrine, so fully taught in the Scriptures, he often referred to as furnishing in his own

experience an occasion of deep humility and grateful praise. Referring to the subject, in a letter, to a friend, he observes:

"This you are aware is not only an item in my creed, but enters into the very ground-work of the hope of immortality and glory, that has become established in my bosom; and constitutes the basis of the submission and joyfulness found in my religious experience. Unless it were possible, which it is not, for God to make some mistake as to what it is best should be developed in the system adopted and pursued by him! Why should it not be the very joy of our bosoms, that he has "fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass?" What can real benevolence desire, but that every thing *should "come to pass"* in the wisest and best manner? to the wisest and best ultimate end? Could not an infinitely wise and good God ordain every thing to come to pass in this very way, and to this very end? Such, too, being the fact, is it not evidently the duty and happiness of every one to give up himself in absolute submission to the will of God; and to be pleased that all things are at the disposal and under the control of this infinitely wise and good Being.

Nor is this at all incompatible with all those exhortations to watchfulness and diligence; admonitions to beware of any, of the least departures from the right ways of the Lord, and encouragements *to walk circumspectly to redeem the time; to follow holiness*, which abound in the sacred Scrip-

tures. If my recollection rightly informs me, you once suggested in conversation, *that our happiness depends very much on ourselves.* This, in perfect harmony too, in my apprehension, with the full conviction, that *all things are of God, that of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; whose we are, and whose are all our ways; and who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;* is most unequivocally in my judgment, correct.

"And it clearly follows, it appears to me, that, in securing our happiness, a main and leading object must be, to form correct views of God, and of the system of truth contained in the holy Scriptures. To this end, nothing is more important than a dutiful child-like disposition. *"If any man will do his will,* HE SHALL KNOW OF THE DOCTRINE." To obtain correct views of truth; humility, an obedient heart, and sincere and fervent prayer, are of essential importance, and will insure success. If these are neglected, the fault must be our own; the failure in the case will be fairly, however sadly; imputable to ourselves. In reference, then, to the solemn and exceedingly important fact, of possessing a stable and permanent basis of peace, of hope, and of ample consolation, which can be found in correct views of the truth of God, in the very sense of your remark; It depends upon ourselves; and should therefore call forth our serious attention, and diligent effort.

"But in addition to a correct and enlarged view of the truth of God, systematically apprehended as ascertained in the sacred Scriptures, to the attainment of which a right state of heart is so exceedingly important, it is also exceedingly important to our daily practical comfort, to be decided and prompt in the path of duty and holiness. I am persuaded that we lose much through hesitancy and indecision. '*If ye love me, keep my commandments*,' said the precious Redeemer.

"This allows not of indecision—but requires promptness and ready action. Is it not, therefore, necessary, that our minds be made up definitely as to the line of conduct to be pursued, touching the main occasions of business, conversations, and incidents of daily occurrence; and when so made up, that we follow out promptly, and without question, the dictates of duty through all the particulars? Is it not also necessary, that our opinions should be definitely formed, on the points of obligation incident to the circumstances in which we are placed, and that we should act decisively, and without hesitation, in accordance with those opinions?

"I am persuaded that we lose much, very much, of the comforts in religion, which we might otherwise enjoy, by our very negligence in these respects. To be decided christians—to live for heaven daily, hourly—to be constant, and undeviating, and prompt in the path of duty—*to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man*: this, this is

the way, I doubt not, to *let our light shine, to glorify God*, to enjoy comfort ourselves, and to do good to others. If we fail of this, the fault must be our own. By sincere watchfulness, by serious and attentive consideration, by earnest prayer, and by careful circumspection and diligence, this elevated and happy condition may undoubtedly be attained.

"God grant that while I write these things—hoping they may prove acceptable, and, perhaps in some degree, even beneficial to you—my own course, and conduct, and conversation, may be, by the effectual operation of the Holy Spirit, in view of these things, modified more and more by the stamp of truth and goodness: '*Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.*' May I be assisted by the grace and good spirit of the Lord, evermore to '*think on these things.*' How happy, how impressively excellent, must be the character that is modified, and moulded, and constantly governed, by the enlightening and purifying influence of '*the glorious gospel of the blessed God.*' "

From the above extract, it will be perceived that he did not hold the truth in unrighteousness. The doctrine of divine decrees has often, in various respects, suffered injury. By its enemies, it has been caricatured. Presented in a distorted shape, and arrayed in tattered garments, its true loveliness has

been concealed from the eye. All have turned away from the sight with disgust. By some of its avowed friends, also, it has been much abused; its legitimate tendencies, if not misunderstood, have been unfelt.

While the truth that believers are chosen in Christ from the foundation of the world, has been maintained, they seem to have forgotten the practical design, that they might be holy, and without blame before him in love. What God has joined together, they have put asunder. In an eminent degree did the subject of this biography delight to contemplate the harmony of the Scriptures, and their practical influence in promoting the good of men and the glory of God.

In another communication, he thus refers to this doctrine:

"How many proofs have we of the truth of what God says: 'That he will work, and none shall let it.' The conduct of his providence is wonderful; it evinces his sovereignty and his inscrutable wisdom, as well as his boundless benevolence. In one place, we may behold the people deeply anxious about eternal concerns, while the inhabitants of neighboring places are wrapt up in careless, profound stupidity. Here a faithful minister of Christ preaches the gospel with clearness and energy, but apparently without success, or, at least, with very partial and limited effect; there, the people become anxious, even where the gospel is not preached in

purity, or where the minister himself is opposed to an awakening.

"Here we may observe a minister of superior talents, and of apparently superior piety, diligence, and fidelity, but still his preaching seems to be mostly only a savor of death unto death; while there, again, we may see a man of scanty abilities blest with effusions of the Holy Spirit among the people of his charge, and is instrumental, apparently, in the hand of God, to the conversion of many souls.

"What but the glorious sovereignty of Jehovah does all this evince? He will send by the hand of whom he will send. 'He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.' He will bless his faithful servant, to whom he has committed only scanty abilities, rather than the man of eminent endowments, lest his hand should be overlooked, and the attention be directed to the creature, instead of the Creator. Gideon's army must be lessened from many thousands to a mere handful—to only three hundred!—lest Israel should vaunt themselves, and attribute their success and victory to the force of numbers, rather than the power and agency of the Lord of hosts.

"How absurd it is, therefore, to contend against the doctrine of election, or decrees, or divine sovereignty. Let us not, however, become bitter against those who view this matter in a different light, nor treat them in a supercilious manner; rather let us

be gentle towards all men. For who has made us to differ from what we once were? Who has removed the scales from our eyes? or who has disposed us to embrace the truth?

"Why are not we sunk in fatal error? Why not like alas! too many of our friends and relatives, replying against God, rejecting his mercy, despising his truth, neglecting the Saviour, or stupidly unsolicitous about the welfare of our immortal souls? 'Oh! to grace how great a debtor?' Let us be humble, not only in view of past wickedness, but of daily sins, and short-comings in duty—and let us have pity on our fellow creatures; surely we cannot be indifferent to their awfully perilous situation—let us pray for them; and as opportunity offers, warn them of their danger, and plead with them by the pains and mercies of our dying, reigning Saviour, to come unto him that they may have life."

That the responsibilities of men are not affected by the purposes of God, Mr. Rice most sincerely believed, and on this particular topic, he very interestingly expatiates in another communication. "An observation you make, that under God our happiness depends on ourselves, appears to me important and valuable. In perfect accordance with this sentiment, is that impressive exhortation of the apostle Jude: 'But ye, beloved, *building up yourselves* on your most holy faith, *praying* in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for

the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.'

"This is a precept of superior excellence. It connects itself with results, and the contemplation of prospects of the most powerful interest, of amazing majesty and sweetness. It dwells much upon my mind; I trust it dwells with divine influence upon my heart. Would to God I might possess and manifest, more and more of the real savor of godliness it is so well calculated to inspire.

"Now the meditating on such a passage, the bringing of it frequently within the hearty, deliberate, and cherished contemplations of the mind, depends very much on ourselves; on our own proper option—the effect too, cannot fail of being seen in the life, and state of the heart.

"Indeed, this train of thought suggests the very serious and weighty responsibilities of every day, and of every hour; in fact, of every moment! To possess the lively impress of such passages as the one referred to, and which depends so very much upon ourselves, the proper action of our own minds and hearts at our own option, in the case, is obviously the way to be happy. It is the way to feel that deep and lively interest in divine things in the cause of God, which is so evidently the very basis and material of our best enjoyments; the very way to realize the truth, and the inexpressible sweetness of the sentiment in the answer to the first question, in that

admirable catechism referred to in my former letter: '*To glorify God and enjoy him for ever!*'

"And this we cannot but see is in perfect agreement with that solemn declaration of the apostle Paul, that '*to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*' When such is the condition of the heart, it will be unavoidably manifested in the deportment; for '*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;*' this then is the way, both *to glorify and enjoy God*, and to do good to our fellow sinners, the way, the very way, and the only way to fulfil the very serious and grave responsibilities of our relation to those around us. When the real life and spirituality of true religion thus abounds in the heart, so as unavoidably as it then cannot but do, to manifest itself in the temper and conversation, it cannot fail to make a beneficial impression on all around; an impression of the truth, excellence, and importance of real godliness."

While these great doctrines of the divine word were highly regarded by Mr. Rice on account of their practical importance, and while he was ready on every suitable occasion to defend and urge them, he was not inclined to indulge in mere metaphysical distinctions, or to pronounce harshly on those who might in some slight particulars, differ from him. He believed that what the apostle called 'vain jangling,' was too prevalent among the disciples of Christ, and deeply deplored it.

It was his wish to see the truth maintained, not for the purpose of promoting a denominational theory, but because it had been taught by the great Teacher, and when it was brought distinctly to view, he desired to see it in connection with the great design of its author, the sanctification and salvation of men. "It has seemed to me, he observed to a friend, to whom he wrote, that some brethren have dwelt so much upon the exhortations of the Bible, the invitations of the Saviour, and the obligations of sinners, that they have much omitted, not to say almost forgotten, that Jesus Christ said, '*no man can come to me except the Father draw him;*' and that when they asked, '*who then can be saved?*' he distinctly replied: *with men* it is impossible,' &c.

"On the other hand, some would seem to have dwelt so almost exclusively, or at least so constantly and earnestly on the plan, and purposes, and power of the Lord Jesus, and the necessity of the agency of the Holy Spirit to work salvation in the soul; as to have seemingly forgot, or much to have omitted the consideration, that '*God now commands all men every where to repent.*' The apostle Paul urged '*repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ;*' that Christ himself distinctly said: '*repent ye and believe the gospel,*' and that the very commission left with the apostles, was to that effect: '*that repentance,*' as well as '*remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.*'

"And so on the one side, they call the others Arminians, and these again pronounce those to be Antinomians. I think it would be much better if both these words were disused, and that brethren holding the same vital truths, instead of getting as far apart as they can, on account of some points not absolutely vital, should come as near together as possible; and as the Holy Ghost commands, should *'love as brethren,'* and also be *'courteous.' 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.'* "

Speaking of the obligations of ministers to be faithful in teaching the whole truth, in reply to one who seemed afraid to hear the decrees of God adverted to in the pulpit, he says: "Does the brother mean to imply that *'purposes and decrees'* are not found in the Bible, and do not, therefore, constitute any part of *'the gospel?'* If found here, why should they not be preached? Ought not every preacher of the gospel be able to say with Paul: *'For I have not shunned to declare uuto you* ALL *the counsel of God,'* and if so, must he not 'PREACH PURPOSES?' or, would our brother object to the preaching of 'such purposes' as the following: 'That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel, according to the eternal PURPOSE, which he PURPOSED in Christ Jesus our Lord.' 'Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he had PURPOSED

in himself.' 'In whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the PURPOSE of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.'

"'By *decrees*,' does he mean any thing different from *predestination?* If not, could he be displeased with *the preaching* of such as: 'Having PREDESTINATED us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.' 'For whom he did foreknow, he also did PREDESTINATE to be conformed to the image of his Son.' 'For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained; (is not here a blessed *decree*, and one that should be preached?) 'that we should walk in them?'

"Similar passages are numerous, and surely the 'good minister of Jesus Christ' cannot excuse himself, or be approved in it by his master, if he shuns to declare this part of *the counsel of God*, while he certainly ought to press the obligation of 'all men every where to repent,' and to 'believe the gospel;' in short, to urge 'repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,' as the immediate duty of all, and earnestly to 'assert the claims of Messiah upon every mortal.'"

A correspondent of the Christian Watchman, a short time after his death, writes:

"The Baptist church, in Lynn, Mass. now consists of one hundred and ninety-three members, and

is efficient in its labors of love. It has also a large and prosperous society. In 1814 or 1815, Mr. Rice in one of his journeys for the benefit of the foreign mission, called at this place, where he found three or four Baptist families. At that time, they had no public meetings established for religious worship. Mr. Rice inquired whether it was not their duty to establish lectures by Baptist ministers, weekly or semi-monthly, offering at the same time, if they would open their doors for this purpose, to go and engage the ministers of Boston, and other places to supply them. To this they agreed, and Mr. Rice went immediately and induced Messrs. Baldwin, Sharp, Chaplin, Bolles, and others, to engage in this service.

"This lecture was regularly maintained for two years, and part of the time, once a week. During this period, there was a revival of religion; several persons were baptised, and a church constituted in 1816, which, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, has thus become a large and prosperous christian community."

For some time after he became a Baptist, Mr. Rice was inclined to believe in the propriety of general, or open communion. Subsequently, his sentiments on this subject, underwent a change. Upon investigation, he saw the inexpediency and inconsistency of the practice, and therefore, could not sanction it.

He thus expresses his sentiments on the importance of well-written biographies, and, in doing so, indicates how dear to his heart was the memory of his former friend and associate, Dr. Staughton.

"Having mentioned *the Columbian College*, let me add, that I have lately read with high satisfaction the memoir of its former president, the truly distinguished elder William Staughton, by elder S. W. Lynd. This is a rich treasure; and the editor, I conceive, has conferred a signal favor on the churches, particularly on young ministers, by producing it. Blemishes there are, no doubt, in the work; but I trust the good sense of the writer, prompted, perhaps, by the suggestions of others, will wipe them away, should another edition, which will doubtless be the case, be called for. It is thought there is too much endeavor, on the part of elder Lynd, to eulogize his deceased relative. This, however, is but natural, and perhaps would hardly be so much thought of, were it not for his relation to the family.

"After all, the highest eulogy of the excellent Staughton is found in his laborious and useful life, and in the specimens furnished in the memoir, and elsewhere; such as, his missionary sermon at the meeting of the Triennial Convention of the Baptist denomination in the United States, at Washington city, in 1823; his welcome to La Fayette at the Columbian College; his eulogium on Dr. Rush; his sermon on the death of the ex-president, at the

Capitol, by public request; his sermon at the opening of a meeting-house near Trenton, N. J.; his address to a class of young ministers, on their completing their course and closing their connection with the institution under his care; his various letters, and other productions, too numerous to be mentioned here;—these afford gems and pearls of great value.

"I am sorry to find the term 'orator' so often applied to him, or applied to him at all; not because he did not possess, in an eminent degree, the attributes denoted by that term, but because it falls so far short of appropriately expressing what he did possess; and because it fails so essentially in that sacredness of import, which ought ever to be uppermost in the mind, when viewing this eminent man of God in the attitude of pouring forth those heavenly, heart-moving, powerful effusions and fervors which so often burst out from his full soul!

"Recently, too, I have had most particular satisfaction in reading the very highly interesting memoir of the so dearly beloved and lamented brother Boardman, by elder Alonzo King; he died literally at his post, in the midst of his converted Karens. The contemplation of his devotion, his trials, his labors, and his success, fills my bosom with indescribable emotions—with astonishment and delight!

"In the memoir of the venerable Roger Williams, from the well known ability and industry of the writer, Professor Knowles, of the Newton Theo-

logical Institution, I promise myself very rich and abundant satisfaction.

"The memoirs of pious, pains-taking, useful ministers of the gospel, I cannot but regard as among the most beneficial works for the perusal of ministers, especially in the early part of their ministry; and elder Babcock, now president of Waterville College, is well entitled, I conceive, to the gratitude of the American churches, for his edition of the Memoirs of Fuller. I have long wanted to see a memoir of the greatly distinguished elder Richard Furman, late of Charleston, South Carolina; and regret that there has not appeared a memoir of the no less distinguished elder Thomas Baldwin, late of Boston, Massachusetts."

The following lines were written by Charles W. Denison, and were suggested by the dying words of Mr. Rice:

Aye, take them to the College! let them be
My dying testament. I shall be dead
To night. And now my heart untwines its ties
On earth, and gives its treasures back again
To heaven—the heart of all the universe.
Come near my friends, ye need not fear to breathe
Beside me now. O would my mounting soul
Had ever soared in atmosphere like this!
'Tis heaven's own air that floats around me here,
And ye should joy to drink it freely in!
Come nearer. I have much to say—and I
Am passing like a shadow on the face
Of time. My destiny has been to point

To the meridian of the church—and now
My spirit points to that of endless day.
O how it soars ! and longs to bathe its wings
In the full sunshine of the face of God !
But, ere I mount, grant me this one request ;
Take all, and give the College. Let the wealth
Which some might bring to gild my coffin with,
Be consecrated where was my poor life.
Nothing for me—but every thing for God !
And let me die, as I have lived, all armed
For battle, on the tented field. Let the sounds
Of rushing hosts—of flashing banner free
Along the breeze—and clash of sword with sword
In spiritual affray—and cheers and shouts
Of "Victory ! Victory !" greet me as I die—
O, 'tis glorious thus to fall asleep.

* * * * * * *

Hark ! did you speak of India ? or did I ?
Or was I dreaming of it ? Yet methought,
I heard the voice of Newell—was it thine,
My Judson ? Thou panoplied of God !
Ah Boardman ! is it thou that speaks ? I hear !
I hear ! And Wheelock ! art thou there ?
These river damps have loaded me with chills.
So I but illy hear thee ! Bring ye news ?
Have dying pagans turned to Christ to day ?
Oh! I have walked a weary round ! and yet
It was not wearying—for I had rod
And staff in all the promises--and there
Were some in whom the word did strike its roots.
Shout ! for the harvest reapers and our arms
Shall bring their loads of sheaves and cast them in
The granary of God. But Judson ! see !
Thy wife is falling there ! she falls ! what she,
The good—the brave--the fair ! and Boardman, too!
Yonder, within the jungle where he toiled,
They dug his grave. How heavy is the air
I breathe from this low place of death ! I faint
I sink !
Ah ! no ! it was a dream ! methought
I was in India--but I see ye, friends

Are all beside me ! Heard ye my request !
Aye take them to the College ! Let me die
With their departed spirits hovering
Around me, and their benisons shall drop
Like dew upon my soul. Hail ! Staughton, hail !
I see thee now—I hear thy welcome song !
I come ! I come ! and as I mount to fly,
I catch a glimpse of those I seek, beyond !
Karens ! my Burmans ! ye are with them there.
Your hands good friends—'Tis sweet to part as now
For that which wings me on, wings you. Aye, take
All to the College ! I am heaven's and God's.

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